

Media perform under review
AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordanian media performance was reviewed by a committee headed by the Minister of Information, Ahmad Al-Khatib, on Monday. The committee, which also included the heads of the Jordanian Press Syndicate and the National Society for Human Rights, is expected to submit a report to the King by the end of the month. The review comes in the wake of a series of criticisms against the media's coverage of the peace process and the King's visit to the Al al Bayt University.

Algerian party leader behind
ALGERIA (AP) — An Algerian party leader is believed to be behind a series of attacks on Israeli targets in the Gaza Strip, according to a report from the Israeli Defense Forces. The report, which was obtained by the Associated Press, says that the leader, who is a member of the Front for the Liberation of Palestine, has been responsible for several suicide bombings and other acts of violence.

Iran rejects US charges
TEHRAN (AP) — Iran has rejected a charge by the United States that it is involved in the export of nuclear technology to Iraq. The charge, which was made by a senior U.S. official, was part of a broader effort to pressure Iran to halt its nuclear program. Iran's foreign minister, Ali Akbar Velayati, said that the charge was "unfounded" and that Iran was committed to peaceful nuclear energy.

U.S. keeps current aid for Israel, Egypt

WASHINGTON (AP) — The proposed U.S. budget for 1996 earmarks \$5.24 billion for countries taking part in the Middle East peace process, led by Israel and Egypt, while slashing U.N. peacekeeping funds. "There will be no cuts for Egypt and Israel," Secretary of State Warren Christopher told reporters. The two countries receive \$3 billion and \$2.1 billion respectively under the current budget. The exact amount of foreign aid to be granted to individual countries under the new budget will not be disclosed for a few days. The United States also is to continue its aid to Jordan made peace with Israel. Some \$275 million already have been granted to that end. But U.S. contributions to U.N. peacekeeping efforts under the proposal would be cut sharply from \$1.3 billion in the 1995 budget to \$345 million in fiscal 1996. "This budget funds UNPROFOR (the U.N. operation in the former Yugoslavia) for the first six months of the fiscal year," Mr. Christopher said, "that is, through March."

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Jordan-Israel peace will set an example, King says

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein said that peace between Jordan and Israel would set "an example" for the Middle East and called for more "personal contacts" between the two countries.

"Our peace will be an example to the region," the King told a delegation of Israeli members of parliament visiting Jordan for the first time.

"We should establish more and more personal contacts, direct contacts between us at all levels," King Hussein said.

"We should do our best to achieve a comprehensive peace... We should work together for the best interests of our future generations," King Hussein said at a dinner in honour of the 29 members of parliament drawn from all Israeli political parties.

The Oct. 26 peace treaty signed between Jordan and Israel ended 46 years of a state of war between them and paved the way for diplomatic ties and cooperation in the various fields between the two neighbours.

The Kingdom and Israel are discussing ambitious projects in accordance with an economic accord that will be finalised by May 10.

King Hussein praised the peace treaty with Israel. He said: "I am very happy with what we have achieved and I am sure that we can achieve more."

He emphasised that he would use his good offices with the Jewish state to try to advance deadlocked Israeli negotiations with Syria and Lebanon.

"We contemplate that peace between us will be part of a comprehensive peace... and we will do what we can to make it so," the Monarch told the gathering (see full text of speech on page 3).

The speaker of the Israeli parliament, Shevach Weiss, said Israel and Jordan had "overcome many problems between us."

"We want to express here our admiration for the courage and efforts of King Hussein to bring our two peoples closer together," Mr. Weiss said.

The Israeli delegation was earlier received by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, who called for "dialogue" between Jordanians and Israelis to lay the foundation for "genuine peace" between the two countries.

Crown Prince Hassan said last Thursday's landmark Arab-Israeli summit in Cairo was aimed at reviving the Palestinian-Israeli track of the peace process.

"The work of our leaders must be supported by an organised effort to institutionalise peace-building. Energies must be devoted to accelerate that transition from peace-making to peace-building," he said.

Jordan was committed to peace despite its heavy burden of debt, the Prince added.

Mr. Weiss headed the Israeli team, which forms nearly a quarter of Israel's parliament.

The delegation included Israeli Arab parliamentarians Abdul Wahab Darawsheh, Salih Tarif and Hashim Mahameed.



His Majesty King Hussein waves to crowds as he visits Al al Bayt University which he inaugurated Monday.

King inaugurates Al al Bayt University, pledges full backing

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein on Monday inaugurated the Al al Bayt University in Mafraq and expressed hope that the new institution would fulfil its mission and serve the Arab and Islamic nation.

Congratulating the Jordanian and Arab people on this achievement, the King said that he would exert all efforts to support the endeavours of the new university.

The King lauded the efforts of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, who heads a royal commission in charge of the university, and Mohammad Adnan Al Bakhti, the university's president, and university staff for their continued endeavours.

The King unveiled a commemorative plaque at the entrance of the university's Al Hassan Ben Ali Auditorium where the ceremony took place.

King Hussein later signed the university's register and wrote the following: "To all the workers and officials at Al al Bayt University: I feel deeply pleased to express to you my gratitude and appreciation for your blessed efforts towards imparting education to the young generation through this educational institution which besides educating, will dedicate efforts to foster faith in the hearts of the students."

"I hope this university will provide students with education in secular and religious matters so that they can best reflect the true image of Islam."

"As we open this university, I would like to underline the importance of fostering the sense of belonging to the Islamic culture, heritage and achievements."

"I would like to underscore the importance of holding dialogues with the students of our universities because constructive dialogues are bound to help spread awareness within a scientific framework of actions designed to bring various Islamic factions closer together and enhance contacts and dialogue with the followers of other faiths and other cultures. These are among the objectives to be fulfilled by the Al al Bayt University."

The King opened the university's computer and language centres, laboratories, the Hashemite Library and exhibition halls which display Islamic heritage.

In the hall there is also a book exhibition and an art exhibition by Princess Wajdan, an exhibition by the Armed Forces Moral Guidance Department, an exhibition organised by the Ministry of Awaqaf and Islamic Affairs and another by the Department of Antiquities held in cooperation with the Italian embassy in Jordan.

A total of 240 local and 450 non-Arab Muslim students are currently enrolled at the university for the academic year 1994-1995, studying at the arts, sciences, economy and administrative sciences, Arabic and Islamic law faculties.

Attending the inauguration ceremony were Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Princes, speakers of Parliament, the chief of the Royal Court and cabinet members along with senior officials and high-ranking army officers.

Kabariti returns home

AMMAN (Petra) — Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabariti returned to Amman Monday evening after taking part in a meeting in Cairo to discuss a unified Arab stand on Palestinians displaced by the 1967 war.

The Cairo meeting, which was attended by the foreign ministers of Palestine and Egypt, was held ahead of a meeting in Amman later this month between the foreign ministers of the three countries and the Israeli foreign minister.

In a statement upon his return, Mr. Kabariti said that he was deeply satisfied with the level of contacts among the concerned Arab countries which would pave the ground for wider contacts among Arab states at different levels.

"The Jordanian government will not spare any effort towards giving momentum to such meetings and contacts in a manner that would best serve the interest of the Arab Nation and deal with the common issues and developments facing the Arab countries," Mr. Kabariti said.

"It was not possible to find solutions to Arab issues without coordination and concerted stands among the Arab leaderships," he added.

Referring to the Cairo meeting, the minister said the three ministers endorsed the principles by an ad hoc technical committee which paved the ground for the ministerial meetings in Amman and Cairo.

He said that the ministers reached specific understanding over the rights of each category of displaced people and discussed means to facilitate their repatriation in accordance with a timetable which will be discussed with the Israeli foreign minister in the Amman meeting.

Israeli guard killed in Gaza ahead of autonomy talks

BEIT LAHIA (Agencies) — Palestinian militants killed an Israeli security guard and wounded another in the Palestinian autonomous Gaza Strip on Monday in an apparent attempt to embarrass Yasser Arafat and undermine autonomy talks with Israel.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) chief denounced the roadside ambush as a "dirty act" and promised swift punishment. Israeli leaders said the attack on Mr. Arafat's own turf underscored Israeli complaints that he was not doing enough to foil attacks on Israelis.

In a telephone call to the Associated Press in Jerusalem, a man claimed responsibility on behalf of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), a PLO faction.

Israeli Radio said the militant group Hamas also claimed responsibility in announcements made over mosque loudspeakers in Gaza, but a Hamas spokesman, Enad Falouji, denied the report.

The ambush came three days before a crucial Rabin-Arafat meeting aimed at getting negotiations on expanding Palestinian autonomy back on track.

Israel has said it would not implement the next phase — a troop pullout from West Bank towns — until Mr. Arafat proved he could rein in the militants.

The shooting occurred at about 8:45 a.m. (0645 GMT) near the town of Beit Lahia. Assaults opened fire on two private Israeli security guards riding in an escort car behind two gasoline trucks. One guard was killed and the other seriously wounded.

Israeli radio reports said the men fired from a passing car.

A Palestinian police officer, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the men had approached on foot through an orchard, opened fire and then fled in a waiting getaway car.

The officer said four Palestinian plainclothes police riding in the convoy fired in the air in response to the ambush and then rushed to the Israelis to administer first aid.

"Mr. Arafat warned he would strike back at the militants," the officer said.

"These criminal attempts will not pass without punishment, and our patience has its limits," an angry Arafat said in a speech to Gaza City high school students.

Palestinian leader rounded up nine Palestinians from homes near the site of the attack and put them on a truck to be taken in for questioning.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Monday that Mr. Arafat's self-rule government "can do more against terrorism," but acknowledged that Israeli troops were sometimes unable to stop attacks in areas they control.

Mr. Rabin said he would take up the matter when he meets with Mr. Arafat on Thursday.

Israel's deputy defence minister, Mordechai Gur, told Mr. Arafat responsible and said if the PLO leader did not go after the militants this time, Israel would not carry out its commitments under the Israel-PLO autonomy accord either.

"If Arafat does not do this, he raises doubts about his ability to do what he committed himself to do in the Oslo (peace) agreement," Mr. Gur said. "If he cannot stick to the agreement, then we don't

Jordan, Israel finalise some accords

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan and Israel have finalised tourism and postal service agreements and would sign the accords later this week in accordance with the Oct. 26 peace treaty signed by the two countries, a senior Jordanian negotiator said Monday.

Hani Al Mulki, head of the Jordanian committee overseeing the implementation of the peace treaty, said that Jordan and Israel also would sign a security accord on Thursday.

Dr. Mulki noted that Israel was to complete its withdrawal from Jordanian territory on Thursday.

Dr. Mulki was speaking at Deir Alla following a committee meeting which discussed the progress in the implementation of the treaty.

He said that the Israeli withdrawal, which started last week along the southern sector, was due to be completed on Thursday.

According to Dr. Mulki, the two sides have already initialled agreements on security and arrangements for border crossings. The official signing will take place on Thursday, he said.

Dr. Mulki added that the subcommittees on transport, the environment, culture and science will hold their meetings in the next two weeks.

Dr. Mulki's comments were carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

Since the peace accord was concluded, Jordanian and Israeli officials have been meeting regularly to formulate sectoral agreements that would regulate ties between their countries.

On Jan. 30, Israel withdrew from 340 square kilometres stretching from the southern tip of the Dead Sea down south to near the Gulf of Aqaba.

It was the first stage of a pullout to be completed by Feb. 10, when Israel will return to the Kingdom additional 40 square kilometres of land, including an area in the north, near the confluence of the Yarmouk and Jordan Rivers.

Jordan and Israel on Monday launched postal services, which include letters and parcels that will be couriered through Cyprus since a transport agreement has not been finalised yet between the two sides.

Ex-ambassador to Bern under probe on funds

By Ghadeer Taher
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Investigations are continuing in a possible case involving Jordan's former Ambassador to Switzerland Akram Barakat, who has been accused of embezzling embassy funds, a Jordanian official said Monday.

Mr. Barakat, who served as Jordan's ambassador to Bern for the last four years, was remanded in custody on Jan. 31, 1995, ten days after he returned home.

The prosecutor-general has refused several appeals by the defendant's family to post bail, family members say. A trial date has not yet been set.

Mr. Barakat's diplomatic passport was withdrawn and he was sent a one-time travel document to return home to face the charges, according to the official.

The embassy in Bern also sent a letter to the Swiss government informing it that Mr. Barakat was wanted in Jordan and that he might try to flee to the United States.

But family members and friends of Mr. Barakat tell a different story. They insist that he is innocent and that he returned home of his own volition on Jan. 11, 1995, travelling on his invalided passport, shortly after his term of duty ended at the end of November. They also say Mr. Barakat and his family were subjected to harassment by some officials of the Foreign Ministry.

"He came back on his own free will. He has no intention or the means to flee the country," said Ali Kassay, Mr. Barakat's brother-in-law. "He would not consult a public menace if he is innocent. His release is important for him and his lawyer to prepare for his defence."

Mr. Barakat's lawyer, Rabee Hamzeh, declined comment on the case.

Mr. Barakat, who served as director of the Jordan Information Bureau (JIB) in Washington for about 12 years before his ambassadorial appointment, has been accused of selling an embassy car and not paying the rent for the embassy building or the ambassador's residence for the last two years, said the official.

He allegedly placed embassy funds in his personal bank account.

According to the charge sheet, the sum in question is around 150,000-200,000 Swiss francs — equivalent to approximately JD 80,000 to JD 100,000.

"Questions are being posed concerning embassy funds and answers will be given in court through the lawyer," said Mr. Kassay. "He and his family were subjected to unnecessary harassment which made it all the more difficult to arrange for his return home," Mr. Kassay contended.

Mr. Barakat, whose term ended in November, was given until the end of December to arrange for his children's education.

Officials said that Mr. Barakat was also questioned by the government's accounting office about "financial irregularities" when he was head of the JIB in Washington. Officials at the accounting office could not be reached for comment.

'Mastermind' pleads guilty to planning New York blasts

NEW YORK (Agencies) — The alleged mastermind of a plot to bomb the United Nations building and other New York landmarks pleaded guilty in a surprise move on Monday morning shortly before the trial was to resume, the government said.

This is the second time Siddiq Ibrahim Siddiq Ali, 34, has agreed to cooperate with prosecutors. He gave his plea to Judge Michael Mukasey.

Last June he briefly became a government witness then changed his mind. The alleged mastermind in the plot, he is accused of being implicated in nearly every phase of the conspiracy.

Prosecutors allege that Mr. Siddiq Ali and 11 others including fiery Muslim cleric Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman planned to "wage a war of urban terrorism" in the United States.

Sheikh Abdul Rahman, an Egyptian, is accused of being the group's spiritual leader while Mr. Siddiq Ali allegedly helped devise the plot. Mr. Siddiq Ali had been an aide and translator for the cleric.

Mr. Siddiq Ali pleaded guilty to all the counts against him, U.S. attorney's office spokesman Marvin Smolin said. He did not say whether prosecutors had made a deal with Mr. Siddiq Ali in exchange for the plea.

John Jacobs, an attorney for another defendant, said Mr. Siddiq Ali had signed a cooperation agreement and then read a statement Monday morning implicating the other defendants.

Mr. Siddiq Ali, 34, a Sudanese immigrant who lived in Jersey City, New Jersey, was accused of conspiracy to wage a war of urban terrorism; solicitation and conspiracy to murder Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak; the attempted bombings; and shipping a firearm, using and carrying a firearm, and carrying destructive devices for that bombing plot.

The plea comes the week after testimony began to the trial of Sheikh Abdul Rahman and 11 followers, including Mr. Siddiq Ali, on charges they plotted a holy war of terror against the United States.

It is the largest terror trial in U.S. history.

At opening statements last week, prosecutor Robert Khuzami said, "this is a case about war... the enemy is the United States, the battlefield the streets and tunnels of New York City."

In a single day, he said, the men wanted to blow up the

Damascus declaration demands Israel sign NPT

CAIRO (Agencies) — Eight Arab states took a united stand on Monday against international tolerance of Israel's refusal to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Egypt, Syria and six Arab Gulf states, meeting in Cairo at foreign ministers level, said exempting Israel from nuclear inspections was incompatible with Middle East peace.

It is the first time so many Arab states, at such a level, have taken a common position in the negotiations leading up to a big non-proliferation conference in Geneva in April.

Israel has never signed the treaty, which runs out this year, and the Arabs, led by Egypt, have taken the opportunity to lobby against the special nuclear status Israel has acquired.

The foreign ministers of Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates said:

"Comprehensive peace must achieve equitable and balanced security for all parties."

"Israel remaining outside the umbrella of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is incompatible with achieving security, peace, stability and development in the region and does not make the treaty universal and effective."

"So the ministers demand that Israel sign this treaty and put its nuclear installations under the system of guarantees of the International Atomic Energy Agency."

Egypt, accepting reports that Israel has about 200 nuclear warheads, has said it would find it very difficult to sign an extended treaty if Israel does not sign too.

The United States, which gives Egypt some \$2.2 billion annually in economic and military aid, has been pressing Cairo to sign. U.S. officials say a compromise might be possible, with Israel giving a commitment to sign at some later stage.

The Israelis argue that they face a potential nuclear threat from countries such as Iran, Iraq and Libya, which are not part of the Middle East peace process.

Saudi Foreign Minister Saud Al Faisal told reporters that the eight countries will ask the Arab League to endorse their position at its next meeting. The 22-member block will meet next month to mark its 50th anniversary.

The two-day meeting here was of countries signing the Damascus declaration in March 1991 after the Gulf war.

The declaration envisioned the creation of a military force including Egyptian, Syrian and Gulf soldiers to defend the oil-rich region so that it would not have to depend on Western help, as it did to free Kuwait from Iraqi occupation.

Since then the foreign ministers of the eight have held 10 sessions to bolster their coordination but failed to agree on a mechanism for their security and military cooperation.

Egypt and Syria, which contributed troops to the U.S.-led alliance that liberated Kuwait, have complained that promises of economic aid to them have not been kept.

Sources at the meeting said the Gulf ministers delayed a discussion of an Egyptian "working paper" which called for channelling aid to both Egypt and Syria.

On the Middle East peace process, the ministers reiterated their support for Syria's demand that Israel agree to withdraw from all the Arab lands it occupied after the 1967 war, including East Jerusalem, in return for peace.

"The eight states call on the international community and especially the sponsors of the peace process (the United States and Russia) to work hard to remove all the obstacles which the Israeli side has created on the road to peace," they added.

AL DALAL BAZAAR

Inside Forte Grand Hotel

Thanks the director general of Forte Grand for his achievements and bids him farewell and wishes Mr. Ammar Kanaan success in his new post as acting director general of Forte Grand under the reign of His Majesty King Hussein.

Paris distances itself from Mitterrand's call for EU meeting on crisis in Algeria

PARIS (R) — Interior Minister Charles Pasqua pulled distance on Sunday between the French government and President Francois Mitterrand over the head of state's controversial proposal for a European-sponsored peace conference for Algeria.

"You put me in a difficult situation because it's the president of the republic," Mr. Pasqua said during a television interview when asked about Mr. Mitterrand's proposal.

"I am a member of his government and at the same time I am not certain that we were a partner in this move," Mr. Pasqua said on Luxembourg television's Grand Jury Public Affairs show.

France's centre-right government "cohabits" with Socialist Mitterrand.

Relations between Algeria and France, its former colonial master, were thrown into crisis over Mr. Mitterrand's suggestion that a platform drafted by Algerian opposition groups in Rome last month could serve as the basis for a European Union (EU) conference on Algeria.

Algeria on Saturday recalled its ambassador to France and called in the French ambassador in Algiers to question him on Mr. Mitterrand's proposal.

Algerian state radio called the plan "interference" generated by what it called Mr. Mitterrand's hatred of Algerian independence, achieved from France in 1962 after a savage eight-year war.

The country has been torn by civil strife since 1992, when the military-backed authorities cancelled elections the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front was poised to win.

An estimated 30,000 people have died in the struggle between authorities and Muslim militants battling to overthrow them.

French cabinet members had previously praised the Rome opposition platform, but government policy has been to let the Algerians settle their own disputes.

The hard-line Pasqua said it was the French government that had "sensitized" its European allies to the problem of extremism and said European experts were meeting this week in Paris to discuss the issue.

Mr. Pasqua ordered police raids and widespread identity checks across France last summer after fundamentalists shot dead five French officials in an embassy housing compound in Algiers.

More than 20 suspected activists were detained and later deported to the West African nation of Burkina Faso.

He also accused Germany and the United States of tolerating extremist fundamentalist activities within their borders.

"Each time that it has been necessary, the [French] police have intervened," he told Luxembourg television, stating that 500 people linked to fundamentalism had been arrested and 250 of these referred to the justice system.

"I can tell you today that we remain vigilant and that each time it becomes necessary we will carry out arrests and expulsions," he said.

More threats

An official of Algeria's former ruling party was found decapitated, security forces said Sunday as radical Islamic

extremists took responsibility for last week's deadly car bombing and promised more.

"The Armed Islamic Group have men who love to die..." read a text published by the Arab-language newspaper Al Hayat, translated by the Associated Press bureau in Beirut.

The claim said two men — one of them 16 — drove the explosives-packed car that blew up in front of Algiers police headquarters Jan. 30, killing 42 people and injuring nearly 300.

It was the bloodiest single attack in a three-year Islamic insurgency in the country and the first by suicide bombers.

Meanwhile, security forces confirmed a report in the afternoon newspaper Horizons that Ahmad Kasbi, a member of the National Liberation Front's central committee, was decapitated last week.

The paper said that Kasbi's head was found Thursday at a bus station in Khemis-Miliana, 100 kilometres west of Algiers. He had been kidnapped two days earlier.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the killing.

Kasbi was the second member of the party's central committee to be slain. The FLN, as it is known, ruled Algeria for nearly three decades and is blamed for the widespread corruption and mismanagement that has drained the nation's economy.

Al Hayat, based in London and published in several Arab capitals, said it received the claim of responsibility Saturday from the Armed Islamic Group, the most radical of the armed groups trying to topple the military-backed government. The group took responsibility for the Dec. 24 Air France hijacking in which three passengers were killed.

"In this (suicide bombing) operation it offered two men, firm as mountains, one of them 16 years old," added the GIA statement, signed by a GIA leader, Abu Abdul Rahman Lamine.

The GIA said the target of the bomb attack was the police headquarters, in Amirouche street, in the centre of the Algerian capital.

"For decades this has been a headquarters for torture, murder and intimidation. Many a Muslim body have the barbaric instruments of torture crushed," it said.

"This symbol of sacrilege had to be removed. This heinous centre had to be destroyed," it added.

"There is no rest, no calm, no relenting, for the blessed month of Ramadan is the month of killing, fighting, conquests and victories. All the mujahideen must intensify military action in the holy war," it added.

In what Al Hayat said was a reference to the death of civilians in the explosion, the GIA said it did not consider itself immune from the mistakes contorted on war.

"Whenever a mistake is made and someone is wronged, the GIA gives a commitment to right the wrong and to apologise," the group said.

It said the members who carried out the operation on Monday were from a GIA brigade called "those who sign in blood." The car was carrying 160 kilograms of TNT, it added.



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma on Monday meets with scouts and guides taking part in a charity drive (Petra photo)

Ramadan campaign under way

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma on Monday reviewed the work of boy scouts and girl guides involved in collecting contributions for the needy families within the year's charity campaign launched during the month of Ramadan by the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF).

The Princess met scouts and guides at the Hashemite Square downtown to discuss the campaign.

Nearly 10,000 young male and female students, members of the scout movements in Jordan, are involved in the campaign to raise funds and in-kind contributions for needy families to be distributed during or after the Holy Month.

The Princess was briefed by the participants on the progress of the campaign and lauded their efforts and voluntary services for the nation.

Later the Princess met the president and members of the board of the Amman Chamber of Commerce to discuss the campaign.

Lauding merchants' support for the charity campaign, the Princess said the contributions reflected their keenness on helping the poor in a show of social solidarity.

The Princess told the meeting that the contributions would help QAF to extend assistance to the family heads to start a small business and become self-reliant.

Chamber President Haydar Murad welcomed the Princess and said that the contributions manifest the determination to ensure social solidarity in the Kingdom.

Mr. Murad called on the citizens and merchants to contribute generously to the campaign and announced a donation of JD60,000 to this year's campaign.

Somali warlord proposes conference

MOGADISHU (AFP) — Somali warlord Ali Mahdi Mohammad on Monday proposed a national reconciliation conference to provide a central government presiding over regions with a high degree of autonomy.

The plan — the result of deliberations in north Mogadishu over three months and 21 days by a "peace conference" among allies of the self-styled "president" — was immediately dismissed by Mohammad Qanyare Afrah, chairman of a rival "peace conference" in south Mogadishu among allies of warlord Mohammed Farah Aidede.

Mr. Ali Mahdi's arch-enemy, Mr. Afrah's reaction — that the initiative was "unrealistic, contradictory, and signed by individuals who do not represent any faction" — made it clear that the stand off between Mr. Ali Mahdi and General Aidede will continue as the last 8,000 U.N. troops and civilians leave Somalia, which has been without a government since the overthrow of dictator Mohammed Siad Barre in January 1991.

Their departure is expected to be followed by battles for Mogadishu's port and airport.

NEWS IN BRIEF

'Bush plot' verdicts due on Feb. 20

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwait's cassation court on Monday adjourned until Feb. 20 its verdicts on seven Iraqis and two Kuwaitis accused of plotting to kill former U.S. President George Bush, justice officials said. The verdict was postponed because the court's presiding judge, Abdulrahman Al Issa, was out of the country, officials told reporters here. Five Iraqis and one Kuwaiti were sentenced to death by the state security court on June 4 for involvement in a plot to assassinate Mr. Bush during a visit to Kuwait in April 1993. Seven others — six Iraqis and one Kuwaiti — were sentenced to prison terms ranging from six months to 12 years. A third Kuwaiti was acquitted. Nine, appealing against their sentences with the others having already served their jail terms.

Killer of Egyptian actress to hang

CAIRO (R) — An Egyptian criminal court sentenced to death by hanging the killer of comic actress Widad Hamdi. Cairo newspapers reported on Monday. They said the verdict was endorsed by Egypt's grand mufti, Sheikh Mohammed Sayyid Tantawi. Hamdi was stabbed to death in her Cairo apartment last year by film impresario Matta Hanna Ghali who confessed to police that he carried out the murder because he was short of money and had planned to rob her. Hamdi, 65, specialised in playing the role of servants.

Israel rescues families of 'collaborators'

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The army is to move the families of 11 Arab informers from the Gaza Strip to safety in Israel, military officials said Monday. They are among about 40 families, mostly bedouins of Egyptian origin, who live under army protection in a "collaborator" village called Dehaneh in the south of the Gaza Strip. The group will be re-settled near Beerseva in the desert after complaining of "constant provocation" by Palestinian police. The Jewish state, which has armed some collaborators, has promised to take in thousands of those who informed on their Palestinian neighbours. Some have been granted Israeli nationality and given new identities.

Keep off Israeli buses, U.S. warns staff

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The United States embassy in Israel has told staff not to use public transport in the wake of a suicide bombing which killed 21 people at a bus stop. "The warning is primarily aimed at buses because of the high incidence of attacks," an embassy official told AFP on Monday. Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for blowing up 21 Israelis on Jan. 22 near the coastal resort of Netanya. A total of 56 people have died in four bus bombings carried out over the last 10 months by militants opposed to the Middle East peace process. The official said staff at the embassy received a warning letter on Jan. 23, which was in fact an updated reminder of long-standing safety instructions.

Egyptian on trial for 1993 hijacking

DUESSELDORF (AP) — An Egyptian man went on trial here Monday for a 1993 airline hijacking that was meant to force U.S. authorities to free a Muslim cleric accused of plotting to blow up New York City landmarks. No connection has turned up between air pirate Khalid Gharib and Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, the blind cleric who is on trial in New York City. Wearing sunglasses and constantly smiling on the first day of his own trial, Gharib told the Dueseldorf state court he had received frequent psychiatric treatment while in the Egyptian military. Saying he had a bomb in his suitcase, Gharib commandeered an Amsterdam-bound Dutch KLM airliner shortly after takeoff from Tunis, Tunisia on Aug. 15, 1993 and forced it to land in Dueseldorf. Gharib made a number of demands, including that Sheikh Abdul Rahman be flown to Egypt. Throughout the 11-hour hijacking Gharib had his hands on small boxes that were in his front trouser pockets. Police feared the boxes were remote-control devices but they turned out to be cigarette packets. Gharib let all 131 passengers and all but two crew members leave the Boeing 737 at Dueseldorf airport. The pilot and chief steward climbed out the cockpit window while Gharib was using the toilet. A crack German anti-terrorist unit stormed the plane and arrested Gharib without firing a shot as he was leaving the toilet.

Iranian deputy sentenced to jail

TEHRAN (AFP) — A member of the Iranian parliament has been sentenced to one year in prison and 30 lashes of the whip for bribery, a newspaper reported here Monday. Majid Naderi, a deputy from the Boie-Zahra region, 150 kilometres west of Tehran, was convicted by a special religious court as he had been a clergyman, the English-language Iran News said. "He was convicted of abusing his position for personal gains," it said adding that he had also been fined 10 million riyals (\$45,000). The paper added that Mr. Naderi and his four accomplices had been "involved in a 110 million rials (\$45,000) scam," but did not give details. The other four were also sentenced to jail. The authorities have repeatedly announced in the past few months plans to crack down on corruption, which has become widespread and has created strong public resentment.

Route chosen for road to avoid pyramids

CAIRO (AFP) — The government has chosen a new route for a Cairo motorway to avoid the pyramids after protests from UNESCO, Culture Minister Farouk Hosni announced. "This route will not cross the region of the pyramids, from Giza to Dahshut," covering an area of 22 square kilometres, he said at a meeting on Sunday in which Prime Minister Atef Sedki also took part. "It's an urgent solution which will protect the region of the pyramids. The route will also not cross the Memphis cemetery," Mr. Hosni told a special government committee formed to discuss the new ring road for Cairo.

Washington supports Yemeni-Saudi talks

SANAA (Agencies) — The United States on Sunday expressed support for negotiations in the 60-year-old Yemen-Saudi border dispute and urged good relations between the two Arabian Peninsula countries.

Sanaa Radio said President Bill Clinton in a written message to Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh expressed Washington's "welcome and support of the talks between the two countries with the aim of reaching a solution to the border issue."

The radio said Mr. Clinton, in the message conveyed by U.S. Ambassador to Sanaa David Newson, also expressed the administration's "keenness for the existence of good and cordial relations between the two neighbouring countries in a way consolidating security, peace and stability in the area."

There were border clashes in December and talks have been going on in Riyadh between Yemen and Saudi Arabia for two weeks.

The United States maintains strategic relations with Saudi Arabia and enjoys good ties with Yemen whose democratic process and multi-party system is encouraged by Washington, diplomats said.

Diplomats said on Sunday that Yemen, once a close ally of Iraq, has sent Iraqi military advisers back home after Washington expressed concern over their presence.

The London-based Arabic daily Al Hayat said on Saturday Yemen's relations with Washington had improved following the decision to get rid of the advisers, who had been training its pilots on advanced MIG-29 fighter planes.

Official Yemeni sources declined to comment on the report.

Yemen and Saudi Arabia accuse each other of moving troops to the potentially oil-rich border area, disputed for 60 years.

Yemeni Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Al Iryani said in Cairo on Saturday he believed Riyadh had pulled back its forces from the area and denied his country had massed troops there.

Dr. Iryani visited Egypt, Syria and Jordan to brief their leaders on developments in the border talks.

Diplomats said on Sunday Yemen is seeking international support for a mechanism to monitor its disputed border with Saudi Arabia and ease tension between the two countries.

They said Yemen had revived an idea of forming a joint military committee of Yemeni and Saudi chiefs of staff and Egyptian and Syrian representatives, first aired by official Yemeni sources last month but received coolly by Saudi Arabia.

It was not clear if Mr. Saleh raised this issue with Mr. Newton during their meeting.

Yemen is still recovering from a secessionist rebellion led by the army of former South Yemen which was crushed last July.

Yemen and Saudi Arabia opened talks in Riyadh on Jan. 23 to prevent new clashes on the border after Yemen accused Saudi Arabia of massing troops and tanks along its northeastern frontier.

Arab diplomats in Riyadh said the talks were stalled Sunday after Yemeni negotiators demanded the demarcation of the whole of the border between the two countries.

Greek experts cast doubt on Alexander's tomb

CAIRO (AFP) — An official Greek delegation on Sunday cast doubt on a Greek archaeologist's claim to have discovered the long-lost tomb of Alexander the Great in Egypt's western desert.

Liana Souvaltzis based her claim on inscriptions which she said referred directly to Alexander the Great on three standing blocks — or steles — discovered at Al Maraki, 16 kilometres northwest of the desert oasis of Siwa.

"I do not know if we have seen all the inscriptions, but those we have seen have nothing to do with the period of (Alexander's contemporary) Ptolemy I, and neither his name nor that of Alexander appears," said Yannis Tzedakis, head of Greece's archaeology services and a member of the delegation.

Ms. Souvaltzis, 47, has been excavating the site of a Doric temple at Al-Maraki, 750 kilometres west of Cairo for six years.

She said she had "irrefutable proof" that she had discovered the tomb of Alexander the Great, who died in 323 B.C. at the age of 33.

However, some Western experts reacted with scepticism to Tuesday's announcement of her discovery, insisting that Alexander was laid to rest in Alexandria, the port city he founded in 332 B.C.

The Greek delegation of experts arrived in Egypt Thursday to check the authenticity of the discovery.

"The fragments of inscriptions we have been shown belong to the Roman era, at the start of the second century A.D.," Mr. Tzedakis told reporters after visiting the site.

The head of the delegation, George Thomas, secretary-general of the Culture Ministry in Athens, added a note of caution.

"Such a short visit in the absence of the archaeologist, who unfortunately could not be with us because of commitments in Cairo, is not enough to confirm the opinions" of Ms. Souvaltzis, Mr. Thomas said in a statement.

He described her discovery as "an important architectural monument."

"Respect for history and deontology means we must wait for the excavation to be completed and the first scientific publication to be made," he said.

However, he added, the inscriptions seen by the delegation "belong chronologically to the Roman era."

Alexander the Great was crowned in the temple of the god Ammon in Siwa in 330 B.C., three years after conquering Egypt. After he died in Babylon his body was brought to Egypt for burial.

But his tomb was never found until now, insisted Ms. Souvaltzis, who was backed in her claim by Abdul Halim Nouredin, head of the Egyptian antiquities authority.

At a press conference Saturday, Ms. Souvaltzis said she called on "the Greek people to be very proud that Greek hands have discovered the tomb of the greatest Greek of all times," and refused to answer questions from non-Greek reporters.

She said one of the inscriptions she had found referred to Ptolemy I, the commander of Egypt whom Alexander asked to make the burial arrangements when he died.

Mr. Tzedakis said Sunday: "To read an inscription which is in fragments is not so easy if you are not an expert. Possibly there is a mistake in the deciphering of the puzzle."

First, he said, "we have to be sure this is a tomb, and then start thinking whether it is Alexander's tomb."

He described the site as a complex. "We do not know if it is a sanctuary, a temple or a temple with a tomb, because there is a crypt" which has not yet been excavated.

Mr. Tzedakis said he had not seen frieze work showing the emblem of Alexander, an eight-pointed star, which Ms. Souvaltzis pointed to as proof of her discovery. He said the emblem had been found in many tombs in Greece, not all of them royal.

The delegation was to return to Athens Monday.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:00 Cocottes Minutes

17:30 Que Le Mielleur Cagie

18:00 Page

19:00 News in French

19:30 Profiles of the Muslim World

19:45 Portrait

19:50 Home Improvement

20:30 Road to Avonlea

21:51 Space Shuttle Discovery

22:00 News in English

22:20 Wild Palms

22:50 Feature film: "Bird on a Wire"

PRAYER TIMES

06:03 Fair

06:22 Dhuhr

11:50 Dhuhr

14:51 'Asr

17:18 Maghreh

18:37 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swatthen, Tel. 810740

St. George's Church, Tel. 624900

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terrasanta Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 625226

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 664195

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 644023

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675901

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALNDAR

Min./Max. temp. 4-7

Amman 9-17

Aqaba 8-14

Deserts 2-9

Jordan Valley 2-9

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 7, Aqaba 20, Humidity readings: Amman 75 per cent, Aqaba 48 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Bahjat Badr 849362

Dr. Mahmoud Hindi 867677

Dr. Mohammad Al 'Abdhi 724959

Dr. Arafat Al Ashab 602507

Firas pharmacy 661912

Fordeos pharmacy 773336

Al Asana pharmacy 637655

Natrouth pharmacy 623672

Al Salam pharmacy 664730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeisat pharmacy 637661

Natrouth pharmacy 623672

Najib pharmacy 847652

IRBID:

Dr. Mohammad Al Hilu 722093

Alqods pharmacy 1-1

ZARQA:

Dr. Walid Halaseh 982929

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 657111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Emergency 630341

Rescue Police (P.O. 627111) 637777

Fire Brigade 617101

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 625372

Traffic Police 806340

Public Security Department 658521

Hotel Complaints 661174

Price Complaints 661174

Water and Sewerage 697467

Complaints 697467

Amman Municipality 767111

Telephone Information (Directorate assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 002320

Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101

Aradali Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 771111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 661111

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company 636381

RJ Flight Information 08-52300

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-52300

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre 81381332

Khalid Maternity, J. Amn 644216

Akheil Maternity, J. Amn 6424112

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Malhas, J. Amman 636149

Pikens, Shomam 6641714

Shmeisat Hospital 649131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Mushar Hospital 6672737

The Islamic, Abdalt 6641646

Al-Ahli, Abdalt 6641646

Italian, Al-Mohareze 771013

Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 77511126

Army, Marka 89141115

Queen Alia Hospital 664155

Amal Hospital 674155

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (0815)3200. 5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

04:30 Vienna (OS)

14:25 Rome (AZ)

20:00 Aden (DY)

20:20 Beirut (ME)

22:20 Amsterdam (KL)

23:59 Bucharest (RO)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:40 Aqaba (RJ)

08:15 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)

11:00 Montreal, Toronto (RJ)

11:35 Geneva, Madrid (RJ)

11:55 Paris, Brussels (RJ)

12:00 London (RJ)

12:00 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)

12:45 Cairo (RJ)

20:05 Larnaca (RJ)

20:30 Jeddah (RJ)

21:25 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)

22:10 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)

23:59 Jeddah (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

04:30 Vienna (OS)

14:25 Rome (AZ)

20:00 Aden (DY)

20:20 Beirut (ME)

22:20 Amsterdam (KL)

23:59 Bucharest (RO)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

05:45 Damascus, Paris (AF)

06:15 Larnaca, Rome (AZ)

10:55 Abu Dhabi (RJ)

13:50 Moscow, Dubai (RJ)

15:25 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)

16:50 Cairo (RJ)

17:30 Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)

18:20 London, Frankfurt (RJ)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 every Monday

Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday

Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday

Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upperflower price in fits per kg.

Apple 700/400

Banana (Mukammur) 600

Banana (Mukammur) 600

Cabbage 140/170

Carrot 220/120

Caiflower 150/100

Cucumber (large) 350/200

Cucumber (small) 350/200

Eggplant 310/200

Garlic 650/500

Green 280/180

Grape Fruit 280/180

Lemon 280/180

Marrow (large) 120/180

Marrow (small) 270/180

Onion (green) 340/240

Onion (dry) 320/200

Orange 100/300

Pepper (hot) 1200/800

Pepper (sweet) 450/250

Potato 300/200

Spinach 150/100

Spruce 100/50

Spruce Beans 100/50

Tomato 250/200

Fuel distributors

AMMAN (Petra) — Traction Corporation (M) of fuel distributors to the metres and measurement withdrawn their permits distributing fuel until such courts concerned. The Ministry of Supply, it said that 14 fuel tankers and distributors were violating specification law, by measures, thus affecting citizens.

14,000 tonnes of sugar

AOABA (Petra) — A tonnes of sugar destined for row docked in Aqaba, which is being warehouses in Aqaba, to the local markets.



PREMIER'S VISIT — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited the Interior Ministry where he chaired a meeting reviewing the ministry's draft laws and regulations which were presented by Interior Minister Salameh Hamad. The meeting reviewed a number of matters related to the Interior Ministry's activities and plans concerning services to various regions of the country. Attending the meeting were the ministers of education, information and culture and the directors general of the General Intelligence Department, the Public Security Department and a number of government officials. The draft laws will be submitted to the Cabinet and later transferred to Parliament for debate and approval.

Israeli Knesset delegation visits Kingdom King Hussein reasserts Jordan's commitment to comprehensive peace

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday said that "we will do all we can for peace in the region to be a comprehensive peace and to realise a better future for the coming generations."

King Hussein in a speech delivered upon receiving a delegation representing the Israeli Knesset at the Hashemiyeh Palace, in the presence of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and senior officials, added that "we hope peace between our two countries and peoples will be an example for others in our region to follow."

His Majesty expressed hope that the time will come when the region will be a region of peace and cooperation, and that the forces of peace will overcome those of darkness.

Following is the full text of His Majesty's speech:

Ladies and Gentlemen ... honourable guests

"It is a pleasure for me, my brother the Crown Prince, prime minister, the speaker of Parliament, and the Senate and all my colleagues here to welcome you on this evening ... we have indeed covered a long distance within a very short space of time but if things are to be explained, they can only be explained by the fact that, I believe, both sides rose up to the level of responsibility not only towards ourselves but towards our peoples and their future and towards generations to come."

"We are very happy with what we have achieved and

we are hopeful that we will achieve more in what I regard as a period of consolidation before us, and, hopefully, peace between our two countries and peoples will be an example for others in our region as we seek together to provide the future of security, based on peace, mutual respect and cooperation in an atmosphere which generations to come can work together and fulfil the dreams and aspirations and achieve what is their right. Nothing in the world would equal the feeling, that I am sure all of us share, that we will be leaving behind us something worthwhile, something worthy of our efforts and endeavours."

"I believe that it is so very important for us in the times ahead to establish more and more face-to-face contacts to direct personal contacts between us on all levels and I am sure that we will find, once this is achieved, that our objectives, hopes and aspirations are one and the same. It will pave the way for our building together the kind of future that is worthy of our people. You are most welcome as honoured representatives of the people and the State of Israel here in Jordan this evening and I hope that we will have the pleasure in the future of welcoming many of you again from time to time."

"I am very happy that this meeting has taken place and I hope that the subjects and topics that were discussed ... I believe they are fundamental for our joint effort

to succeed in the period of consolidation which is ahead of us. We indeed hope and pray that peace between us is going to be part of a comprehensive peace in the region, and we will do what we can to make it so. None of us, if we look into our hearts and into our souls through our beliefs, can deny that what compels us to resolve our problems and work together is far more than what divided us. The children of Abraham and their followers, the followers of the three great monotheistic religions, as Muslims, cannot look at ourselves and deny the common origin and that there is much that unites us."

"Let us hope that we will succeed in all our endeavours and we will do all we can for a better future for all the generations to come in this region, and maybe this part of the world will once again inspire people everywhere in our world."

"I thank you very very much indeed for being with us and I promise you that we will do all we can to continue (the work) for (real peace) and we count on you to do the same. And this is yet one other opportunity for us to be together at this level, and hopefully we will see a continuation of contacts, on all levels, so that the mythical barriers can disappear in time if they still exist and people can see the human face of each other as we build together a better future for this region."

"I thank you very very much and you are most welcome and let us hope that

there will come a time soon when this entire region will be a region of peace, harmony, cooperation, where human beings will live in peace and in security and where the battle is one where the forces of peace will (win) over those of darkness who wish us to be denied this opportunity and chance to fulfil our duties."

"Al Salam" is one of the names of God; let him bless our efforts, and give us success in all our endeavours. Thank you very much indeed and God bless you."

Following is the text of the Israeli parliament speaker Shevach Weiss's speech:

"Our distinguished hosts, His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Mr. Prime Minister, the president of the Jordanian Senate, the speaker of the Jordanian Parliament, members of the Jordanian government, my colleagues from Israel, deputy speaker, chairman of the parliamentary branches, honourable guests."

"I have with me a prepared speech to address, but after a small talk from heart to heart around these tables, with your permission. Your Majesty, I will change my speech and I will express my feelings after the speech. First of all, thank you so much for this invitation. We are here as representatives of the Israeli democracy."

"We are here delegates of all parties and all powers of our nation. We are here as representatives of all our ethnic groups: Jews, Arabs,

Druze.

"We are here because we are ... to the continuing of this historic, important peace process."

"The peace treaty with Jordan is supported by the majority of Israeli citizens, and the majority of the Israeli population, and the historic majority of our parliamentary groups and members of our parliament."

"I am sure we have the power and we have the obligation to change the historic ... the history in the last five generations. We are (obliged) to change, and we have a window of historic opportunities ... after achieving this peace with your nation and country."

"I would like to express our admiration to you and your family's courage, to your wisdom, to your very effective and fruitful process of decision, and I hope that this peace treaty between our two states will become an example for all states in this region."

"Your Majesty, I would like to renew the invitation of the president of the State of Israel, Ezer Weizman, the prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin, to you and your family and your government to come to Israel to visit us with your delegation as soon as possible. And with your permission, I would like to add one sentence in your language, 'Kul am wa antum bi khair'."

"We are here as a united Israeli parliamentary delegation and we are here united and (obliged) to continue the peace process."

"Thank you very much."

Australian parliamentarians laud ties with Jordan

CANBERRA (Petra) — Speakers of the Senate and House of Representatives in Australia Monday lauded the strong and progressive ties between Jordan and Australia, especially in parliamentary and economic fields.

The Australian parliamentarians, who were speaking during a visit to the House of Representatives by a Jordanian parliamentary delegation led by Deputy Speaker Al Masri, voiced Australia's backing for the Middle East peace efforts and their appreciation of his Majesty King Hussein's role to achieve peace and the conclusion of the Jordan-Israel peace treaty.

They also emphasised the need to further bolster Australian-Jordanian parliamentary cooperation and the exchange of expertise, and said Australia was quite ready to provide any possible assistance to Jordan in all fields.

The Australian officials said they were impressed by Jordan's fast development and economic endeavours and expressed hope that Jordan and Australia will increase the volume of exchange goods.

They said that the Australian foreign trade minister is scheduled to pay a visit to Jordan in the coming few days in order to discuss ways

for such increases.

In reply, Mr. Masri noted that his team's visit marked the first Jordanian parliamentarians' visit to Australia, expressing hope that it will mark the beginning of strong cooperation in parliamentary affairs.

Mr. Masri, who conveyed a message from the speakers of the Senate and the Lower House of Parliament in Jordan, extended an invitation to the Australian spokesman to parliament to visit Jordan and examine the Jordanian democratic process.

The Jordanian parliamentarians attended part of the Australian parliament meetings in Canberra.

Police searching for hit and run driver

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN (Petra) — Ramtha and Irbid police Monday continued their search for a trailer driver whose vehicle witnesses said, Sunday noon struck and killed a 10-year-old boy in Tourah area in Ramtha.

Witnesses told police that the victim, Salem Adnan, was playing in the street, when he was struck by the trailer whose driver fled the scene.

A police official told the Jordan Times Monday that the authorities have a "fairly good description" of the suspect.

"Bystanders where the accident occurred gave us a good description of the vehicle, and we have placed patrol units in different areas to find the suspect," the police official said.

The victim was rushed to the Ramtha government hospital but was declared dead on arrival.

Traffic officials attributed the accident to wrongful overtaking by Yousef A. (70). Moreover, slippery roads on Sunday caused a public bus to lose control and slide off the road injuring 21 people, police reports indicated.

The report however did not indicate the time or place of the accident.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

FILM

★ Polish film entitled "Between Cap and Lip" (with subtitles in English) at the Goethe-Institut at 7:30 p.m.

PLAY

★ Play (in Arabic) entitled "Ye Who Are Hearing" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 9:00 p.m.

★ Play (in Arabic) entitled "The Firefighter" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

★ Exhibition of works by Qasim Al Samir at the Housing Bank Complex Gallery.

★ Book exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre. Also showing another exhibition of Arabic Calligraphy.

★ Exhibition of the works of Lebanese artist Amin Al Basha at Darat Al Funun. Also showing another exhibition entitled "Phase II-Doors and Windows" by Jordanian artist Ghada Dahdaleh and works by contemporary Arab artists.

★ Educational works depicting the life of "Voltaire" at the French Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition of works by Hala Mahayni at the Petra International Hotel in Aqaba.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Prince Ra'd to attend ophthalmologists' talks

AMMAN (Petra) — Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid will be the main speaker at the third international conference of the Arab ophthalmologists which will be held in Marrakech, Morocco, between April 10 and 14, 1995. Prince Ra'd, who is chairman of the Friends of the Eye Bank and Prevention of Blindness Society, received the invitation Monday from the conference's council Secretary General Akel Al Mughrabi to participate in the conference to which around 1,300 ophthalmologists will take part.

Envoys present credentials

LUXEMBOURG (Petra) — Jordan's Ambassador to Belgium Khaled Madadha has presented his credentials to the prince of Luxembourg as non-resident ambassador to Luxembourg. Mr. Madadha conveyed greetings from His Majesty King Hussein and Jordan's desire to enhance bilateral relations in all fields. The prince expressed deep appreciation to the King for his peace efforts and congratulated Jordan on concluding the peace treaty with Israel. Husam Abu Ghazaleh, Jordan's ambassador to Austria, Monday presented his credentials to the president of Slovakia as Jordan's non-resident ambassador there. He expressed Jordan's desire to expand economic and trade relations with Slovakia. The president asked that the ambassador convey greetings to King Hussein and the Jordanian people.

RJ to fly to Barcelona

AMMAN (Petra) — Ahmad Jweiber, director general of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) returned to Amman from Spain Monday and announced he concluded a deal whereby Royal Jordan (RJ) will operate flights to Barcelona, in addition to Madrid, the capital of Spain. He said that the agreement was reached in talks with Spanish Civil Aviation authorities. The two sides have also agreed to amend the present bilateral agreement in a manner that would cater to the requirements of security, in accordance with regulations set by the International Civil Aviation Organisation.

Lawyers announce candidates

AMMAN (Petra) — Five Jordanian lawyers have announced their candidature for the Bar Association presidency and 28 others for the board membership prior to the Bar's elections which are scheduled for March 10. A total of 2,700 Jordanian lawyers are eligible to take part in the elections.

Fuel distributors referred to courts

AMMAN (Petra) — The Meteorology and Specification Corporation (MSC) has referred a number of fuel distributors to the competent courts for trial, after finding them guilty of tampering with the metres and measurements. The corporation has withdrawn their permits and prevented them from distributing fuel until sentences are passed by the courts concerned. The MSC has recently discovered that 14 fuel tankers and two fuel stations and gas distributors were violating the meteorology and specification law, by tampering with metres and measures, thus affecting the quantity of fuel sold to citizens.

14,000 tonnes of sugar arrive in Aqaba

AQABA (Petra) — A vessel laden with 14,000 tonnes of sugar destined for the Ministry of Supply has now docked in Aqaba harbour, according to the Ministry of Supply. It said in a statement that the sugar, which is being unloaded in the ministry's warehouses in Aqaba, will be moved to Amman and other cities later on to meet the sugar shortages in the local markets.

More rain, snowfall expected

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Department of Meteorology Tuesday forecast rainy conditions in Jordan for Tuesday and Wednesday as a result of a low depression centred over Cyprus.

A department official said that the depression will be accompanied by cold fronts affecting the eastern Mediterranean region and bringing in rain that will affect all parts of the country.

Department Acting Director Amin Qarreen said Tuesday will also witness some snowfall on the high regions in the country.

He said that in Aqaba, scattered rains are expected with strong to moderate winds. The official warned that low-lying regions could be flooded by rain water and that there will be poor visibility due to fog formation.

He said that the temperatures will drop to four degrees at night rising to only seven degrees during the day.

Meanwhile, the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA), announced Monday that the reservoirs behind the Kingdom's dams have accumulated 82,620,000 cubic metres of rain water.

The JVA said that the King Talal Dam, the largest in the Kingdom, contains more than 63.5 million cubic metres of water out of an 80 million-cubic metres capacity.

He added that Wadi Shueb and Kafra dams were full to capacity, containing 2.43 million and 2.5 million cubic metres respectively.

Nigerian official expresses his country's desire to expand trade with Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — The Nigerian official said the Nigerian government and the business community.

The official requested Mr. Abo Hassan to warn Jordanian businessmen against dealing with organisations which have been sending fax messages to them about imaginary projects, inviting them to make investments in them. He said that these suspect organisations operating in Nigeria are run by frauds trying to embezzle money from businessmen through imaginary schemes; he added that such messages should be

Jordan, Syria sign protocol for joint trade council

DAMASCUS (J.T.) — The Jordanian Businessmen Association (JBA) and the Syrian Federation of Chambers of Commerce Monday signed in Damascus a protocol on the establishment of a joint Jordanian-Syrian business council designed to encourage trade between the two countries.

The protocol provides for measures needed to overcome obstacles impeding trade exchanges, increasing reciprocal visits to Jordan and Syria by the private sectors, encouraging the launching of joint economic ventures and joint investments and conducting training courses for cadres, needed to bolster ties.

The protocol also entails facilities for Syrian and Jordanian travellers to Amman and Damascus and the flow of national products across the common borders.

JBA Chairman Hamdi Tabbaa, who signed the protocol with Kabeel Shallah, chairman of the Syrian federation, said that the brotherly relations between Jordan and Syria help them boost their trade and build a solid base for economic coordination and cooperation.

Mr. Tabbaa pointed out that while Jordan last year sold JD 25 million worth of products to Syria, it imported JD 45 million worth of Syrian goods.

He said that this volume of trade exchange accounts for

little compared to the two countries' foreign trade with other countries.

Noting that Jordan and Syria were among the foremost countries to sign the pan-Arab deal for an Arab common market, Mr. Tabbaa said that credit should go to the higher Joint Jordanian Syrian Committee which serves as an umbrella for bilateral cooperation in trade and other fields.

In view of the circumstances which prevail in the region, said Mr. Tabbaa, it is imperative on the two countries to pool their efforts and confront economic competition with a joint stand so as to protect the two countries' trade, economic, industrial and services fields.

He said that this volume of trade exchange accounts for

Jordan to attend meeting on investment in tourism

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Federation of Chambers of Commerce and its affiliated institutions in Jordan will take part in a general conference on investments in tourism and hotel sectors in the Arab World due to open in Damascus in March.

Haidar Murad, Federation chairman, said that Jordan's participation underlines the importance it attaches to the development of tourism.

Mr. Murad made the announcement following his meeting here last week with Dr. Othman Al Ajdi, chairman of the Arab Federation of Tourism and Hotel, when they discussed topics related to promoting tourism in the Arab World.

Dr. Ajdi outlined the general tourism situation in

the Arab countries and the prospects for investments by the private sector organisations and companies.

Meanwhile, the Jordanian Businessmen Association (JBA) announced Sunday that in cooperation with the Arab Economists Society of Jerusalem it will organise the first conference by Jordanian and Palestinian businessmen in Amman in June.

A JBA statement said that in light of the Jordanian-Palestinian agreements concluded in Amman last month which focused mainly on trade, economy and investment fields, the two business communities on the two banks of the River Jordan have decided to hold this first conference in the first week of June to give a chance to

the business people on both sides study prospects for joint investments and coordinate their stands and their policies vis-a-vis the outside world.

The two sides will present working papers on economic, industrial and investment development during the coming meetings, said the statement.

A whole range of topics, including tourism, transport, trade, agriculture, industry, contracting and construction, insurance, banking and financial affairs will be addressed in the coming meeting, said the statement.

It said that the conference is also expected to come up with a proper mechanism for cooperation and coordination in various fields between the private sectors, on a constant basis.

Damascus declaration

(Continued from page 1)

The eight adopted in full the policy towards Iraq already pursued by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

They said Iraq recognising Kuwait last year was an important step in the right direction but Baghdad must comply with all U.N. resolutions, release Kuwaiti prisoners and give back all Kuwaiti property.

In a surprise move Syria, a close ally of Iran, joined the Gulf countries in urging Tehran to put an end to its occupation of three islands in the Gulf, which are claimed by the UAE.

Burma rebels set up headquarters; Thais begin return of refugees

BANGKOK (AFP) — Ethnic Karen rebels, routed from their mountain headquarters last month, said Monday they had returned to Burma to continue fighting, while Thai border units began repatriating refugees to areas they said were now safe.

In a seven-page statement, the Karen National Union (KNU) said its military leader, General Bo Mya, had set up a temporary headquarters in "Karen-held territory elsewhere inside Burma."

He and other senior KNU officials would continue to battle Rangoon's attempts to "hulldoze the KNU into submission," it said.

As the rebels prepared a fresh start for their war for autonomy, Thailand began repatriating the first some 10,000 Karen refugees who fled fighting last month between troops of the Rangoon junta and ethnic insurgents.

A total of 1,273 Karen were sent across the border to Burma Sunday from Kancharaburi province, 155 kilometres west of here, an official with the Thai Ninth Infantry Division said. Another 911 were to be sent

back Monday, he said.

Those refugees had reportedly fled fighting and enforced labour around the rebel Karen outpost of Kawmawlaw in Tavoy-Mergui. The official told AFP Monday that fighting in the area had stopped.

Some 7,000 to 8,000 other Karen who fled battles in eastern Burma remained huddled at half a dozen camps along the Thai-Burmese border further north, according to Karen relief sources.

"They are afraid that they will be sent back now," a KNU refugee official said recently. "They know what (the Thai Interior Ministry) has said."

Last week, Thai Interior Minister Sanan Kachornprasart was reported as saying he would repatriate all Karen refugees immediately because they were fleeing a military action, not political persecution.

But contrary statements by other senior Thai officials have left policy at the border ambiguous.

"I think the Thai army is waiting to see who will set the

policy," Naing Aung, chairman of the All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF), said recently. "This has been confusing for them, too."

Early Monday, Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai flew to the northern border district of Mae Sariang where authorities were coordinating relief efforts, Thai Radio reported.

The premier did not speak with reporters, but the trip underscored the increasing tension along the Moei River, where government troops have been seen marching northward.

Just a few kilometres east of Mae Sariang, a Thai border police officer was shot and critically wounded Sunday when his patrol tried to disarm three men with rifles at Mac San Laep border town, a Thai border officer said Monday.

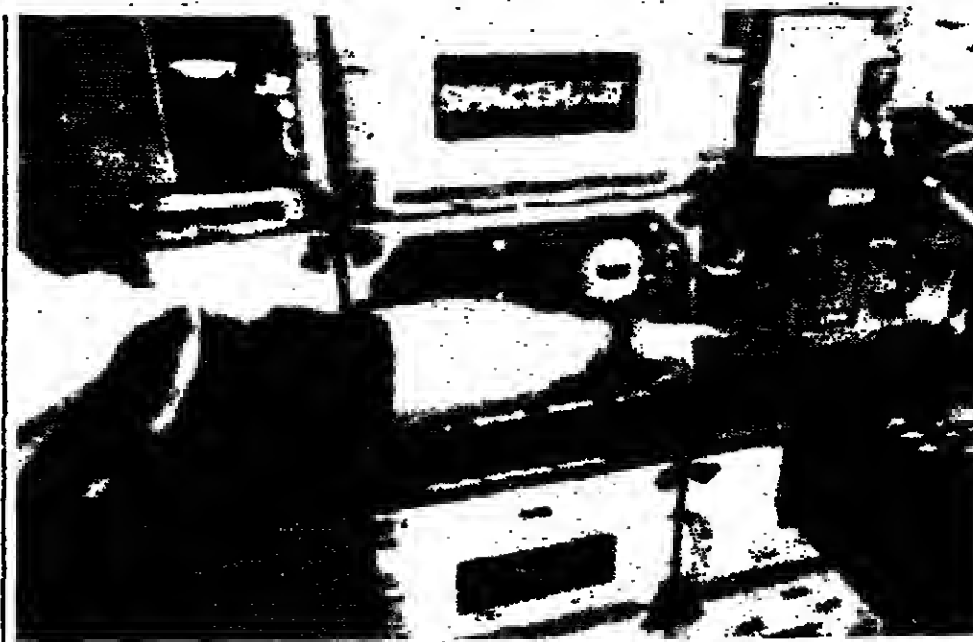
The unidentified men fired on four Thai officers, then fled to a boat and crossed to Burma, the official with BBP's Unit 337 told AFP. The wounded officer was in intensive care in Mae Sariang Monday, he said.

The KNU has asked Chuan and other Thai officials to acknowledge "the need of the KNU and other (Burmese) opposition organisations to have access to the international community through Thailand and to be able to make their political voice heard."

Thousands of ethnic Karen spilled across the border late last month, when the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), the official name of the Rangoon junta, began a concentrated campaign to end Karen rebel resistance in Burma.

The junta, breaking its own unilaterally declared ceasefire with the rebels, took the KNU and opposition headquarters of Manerplaw on Jan. 27. The SLORC launched artillery and ground attacks on several other positions simultaneously.

The move has drawn criticism from the United States and caused some Thai officials, among them Foreign Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, to question the effectiveness of Thailand's economic policy of "constructive engagement" with the Rangoon regime.



Russian Astronaut Vladimir Titov points to the Russian space station Mir during their scheduled eight-day mission in space (AFP photo)

Russian space agency to NASA: No leaks allowed near Mir station

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — The message from the Russian Space Agency to NASA is clear: Your leaking space shuttle cannot come near our Mir.

With time running out, NASA ordered shuttle astronauts to try to repressurise a leaking jet in a long-shot effort to stop the drainage and permit a close encounter Monday with Russia's orbiting Mir space station.

The thruster was still leaking a trail of icy fuel when the crew awoke early Monday, about 1100 kilometres and 13 hours before the scheduled meeting.

Russian officials insist that, unless the steering jet stops spewing fuel, the shuttle discovery must stay at least 122 metres from Mir — 111 metres further than planned. They fear the small chunks of

frozen capsule attached to the station and needed by the three Mir cosmonauts to return to Earth next month.

Mission operations director Randy Stone said National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) engineers believe the leaking nitrogen tetroxide would not attach to anything and poses no danger.

But the Russians aren't convinced, "and it's their call," he said.

"They don't fully understand all of the capabilities of our vehicle... It's mostly just the very methodical and conservative engineering approach that they take to things when they don't have a full knowledge of the system," he said.

The original plan called for Discovery and its crew of six to fly within 10 metres of the station as a dress rehearsal

for the first shuttle-Mir docking in June. NASA wanted to see how well the shuttle handled next to a 100-tonne station and test navigation and communication systems.

"Obviously, the closer we can get the better it will be," said Discovery pilot Ellison S. S. Collins. "But even if we only go to 300 metres... we will still be getting a lot of good information."

Months before the mission, the U.S. and Russian space agencies agreed that discovery would forgo the close encounter if any one of seven critical steering thrusters failed.

Seven Atlantis-Mir dockings are planned through 1997. After that, NASA plans to start building an international space station with Russia and other countries.

Big earthquake rattles N. Zealand

WELLINGTON (AFP) — An earthquake measuring a potentially devastating seven on the Richter Scale occurred off the coast of New Zealand Monday but miraculously caused no damage.

The effects of the quake were minimised by the epicentre's location in the Pacific Ocean about 125 kilometres (77 miles) south-east of East Cape, according to Martin Reyners, deputy chief seismologist at the Institute of Geological and Nac-

lear Sciences. Nevertheless, he said, "it was a decent-sized shake and felt from Auckland to Christchurch," he said.

The tremor occurred about 11.50 a.m. (2250 GMT), but aftershocks were still being felt 4-12 hours after the first jolt, and although shorter and less powerful, were still unnerving for some residents.

At the east coast township of Tolaga Bay, one of the

closest points to the epicentre, motel owner Wally Tukukino said there had been five aftershocks in that period.

He said the initial quake seemed to last about 45 seconds and felt like a rolling movement. Some of the aftershocks had lasted as long as 15 seconds.

Ministry of Civil Defence duty officer Tom Finnimore said there had been reports of objects falling from shelves in Tolaga Bay.

Doug McClure, western actor, dies at 59

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Doug McClure, the blond, boyish cowboy star of the television shows The Virginian, The Overland Trail and The Men From Shiloh, died of cancer Sunday night. He was 59.

McClure died at his home in the Los Angeles suburb of Sherman Oaks with family and friends by his side, said McClure's friend, Dennis Morga.

After struggling a year with lung cancer, McClure appeared last Dec. 16 for the installation of his star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Getting the star helped him feel better, he told well-wishers.

"It gave me the incentive to get well, and I well," he declared.

But on Jan. 8, the actor collapsed from an apparent stroke on the set of a theatrical film in Hawaii and was flown to Los Angeles for hospitalisation.

Doctors discovered the cancer had spread to his liver and bones, Morga said.

"Doug was one of the kindest people I have ever

known, and a real gentleman," said Morga, who recently produced several marketing videos that McClure appeared in and directed. "He was a true professional — always prepared on the set and easy and fun to work with. I'll miss him very much."

McClure's career took off in 1960 when he was cast as William Buntick's sidekick in the NBC series The Overland Trail. The show lasted only a half-season, and he immediately started on Checkmate, a private-eye series.

In 1962, the actor joined the cast of The Virginian, an ambitious, big-budget NBC project which was the first filmed series with 90-minute episodes. McClure played the role of Trampas, the villain in the Owen Wister novel and the three movie versions.

Trampas was rehabilitated in the series as a happy-go-lucky young cowpoke.

McClure fit easily into the Western atmosphere. He had been riding horseback since the age of 8 in his hometown of Glendale, California. As a teenager he spent summers

on a cattle ranch and was a bronco-buster in occasional rodeos.

After eight successful years of The Virginian, NBC introduced a spinoff, The Men From Shiloh. It lasted one season.

"I had this feeling everybody thought I was dead," he said in a 1988 interview. "I didn't quit. I did some films and theatre in London. I went to New York. But I had been on television so much, people thought I wasn't around."

McClure returned to TV series in 1975 for the one-season Western Barbary Coast. He continued making guest appearances on TV, notably in the 1977 classic Roots. His other film credits include Cannonball Run II, 52 Pickup, Omega Syndrome, Dark Before Dawn, Tapheads.

In addition to his wife, Diane, McClure is survived by two children from previous marriages, Tane and Valerie McClure; his mother, Clara Clapp, and a brother, Reed.

9 years after 'people power,' Filipino political clans back with a vengeance

MANILA (AP) — Nine years after the "people power revolution" promised a new era in Philippine politics, political clans and establishment politicians are back with a vengeance in advance of May's national elections.

Last Friday was the deadline for candidates to file for 12 senatorial seats to be filled May 8. The list of serious contenders includes four children or grandchildren of former presidents, including Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

Voters will also choose governors, mayors and House of Representatives members, although their filing deadline is March 20. Those expected to seek lesser office include movie stars, comedians and even Imelda Marcos, free on bond after a graft conviction which could land her 24 years in jail.

This is far removed from the expectations raised in the February 1986 "people power" uprising, which toppled the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos and swept Corason Aquino into the presidency.

Political rhetoric at the time was rich with references to a "new era" in politics and to breaking the grip of influential clans on national life. That clearly did not happen.

In an effort to strengthen his influence in the Senate, President Fidel Ramos forged an alliance between his Lakas (Strength) and the opposition Laban (Fight) to produce a joint senatorial ticket.

The list reads like a "Who's Who" of Philippine politics for the last half century. Among the 12 candidates are Sen. Gloria Arroyo, whose father Diosdado Macapagal served as president from 1961 until 1965. Ramon Magaysay Jr., whose president-father was killed in

a plane crash in 1957, is also running, along with Sergio Osmeña III, whose grandfather-namesake served as president of the Philippine Commonwealth from 1944 until 1946.

Marcos Jr., is running under the standard of the opposition National Peoples Coalition and is given a good chance of winning despite widespread opposition to his father's authoritarian rule.

Mr. Ramos' ticket also includes Ramon Mitra, whom he defeated in the 1992 presidential election, Rep. Juan Ponce Enrile, fired as defence minister in 1986 after a failed coup against Mrs. Aquino, and three candidates soundly defeated for vice president in the last election: Magaysay Jr., Marcelo Fernan and Aquilino Pimentel.

Mr. Ramos put together the coalition to solidify his grip on congress in the last three years of his term.

Parliament passed a resolution Saturday, saying Mr. Walesa had no grounds to dissolve it and threatening to take him before the state tribunal, a special court that determines whether politicians are acting within the constitution.

Mr. Walesa, repeating accusations of corruption among government and parliament members, made his appeal to the legislative leaders after a brief meeting with Mr. Pawlak at the presidential palace.

Mr. Pawlak, criticised by members of his own coalition for not consulting with them, said Saturday he was ready to share power and responsibility with Aleksander Kwasniewski, head of the former Communists, the Democratic Left Alliance.

Mr. Kwasniewski is expected to be Mr. Walesa's main rival in the November presidential elections. Mr. Walesa had commented Saturday that he would not oppose formation of a government headed by Mr. Kwasniewski, who would be "more efficient" than Mr. Pawlak, but "not to the liking" of many people.

Mr. Walesa did not explain why he wouldn't object to a Kwasniewski government.

Walesa asks parliament to dissolve

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — President Lech Walesa, who has begun the process to dissolve parliament in order to call new elections and oust the left-dominated government, asked the legislators Monday to dissolve their own body or he would do it for them.

"I appeal to you, please step down, because history will not forgive us," Mr. Walesa told a meeting of caucus leaders and speakers of both chambers of parliament. "If you don't do that, then I will take the decision."

The meeting had been called to resolve a deadlock between the three centres of power. The president, the government of Prime Minister Waldemar Pawlak and parliament.

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Catalans pledge support for Spain's Gonzalez

BARCELONA, Spain (R) — Spain's ruling Socialists are sure of Catalan support at least for another year even if they suffer a ringing defeat in May's municipal elections and recent political scandals continue.

Catalan leader Jordi Pujol, who has a rare meeting with opposition Popular Party (PP) leader Jose Maria Aznar Monday, says he has no intention of seeking any deal with the PP.

"We are saying we guarantee support to the Socialists at least until the next State of the Nation address in 1996, even if there is an electoral collapse (in May)," Mr. Pujol said.

"A hypothetical Aznar government is not on the agenda. The PP is a valid political alternative for the future and it is important to keep up a dialogue," he told foreign journalists here Friday.

The 17 seats of Mr. Pujol's

Convergencia i Unio guarantee a Socialist majority of one in the lower house, but a series of allegations of government involvement in a dirty war on ETA (Basque Homeland and Freedom) guerrillas during the 1980s has heightened opposition pressure for early general elections.

Mr. Pujol said far from the common Catalan image as separatists, their priority is to ensure democratic stability.

Speaking ahead of Wednesday's annual State of the Nation debate, in which Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez is expected to come under heavy attack from the opposition, Mr. Pujol said he saw no alternative to the present alliance.

"What is the alternative? Either we have early elections or we continue what we are doing," he said. "A government of the right is highly unlikely under present circumstances."

Mr. Pujol criticised the picture he said had been painted in the foreign press of a Socialist government on its last legs, and said not even more arrests of former government officials in the death squad investigations would shake Catalan support.

A former state security chief has already been re-manded in custody in December, and former Under-Secretary of State for Security Rafael Vera is presently under investigation.

"If Vera is imprisoned, it would produce a shock, but it would not make us change our minds," said Mr. Pujol.

But while the Catalan leader was generally happy with the 1995 economic programme that Mr. Gonzalez will lay out Wednesday, he was resigned to a slower pace of economic reform this year than he would like.

"It's true they won't do all

the reforms this year that they should. We have insisted but they don't dare," he said.

"This is a year in which we'll see if Spain can turn the corner, both in economic recovery but also in industrial policy. It's an historical opportunity for Spain to change course."

Asked if the Catalans rejected outright any alliance with the centre-right Popular Party, Mr. Pujol said his support is for programmes and for those who are capable of carrying them out.

The Catalans, he said, gave their support to the Socialists "because they have the ability to carry out the programmes we want" and this would continue to be its guiding principle.

Whether the Catalans would support a Socialist government not headed by Mr. Gonzalez, he said, would only be a hypothesis in the event of a transition government prior to elections.

U.S. actor to film in Sarajevo

BELGRADE (R) — U.S. actor Harvey Keitel, star of the hit films Pulp Fiction and The Piano will shoot scenes for a new movie in besieged Sarajevo next month. The Gaze Of Odysseus is the story of a director, played by Keitel, who goes to the Bosnian capital to search for an old Balkan film. "It's not a political film although Sarajevo is part of the narrative," Keitel told Reuters Monday. "It's the story of a soul's journey to redeem itself." It will be the first time a commercial film has been shot in Sarajevo since the siege by Bosnian Serbs began nearly three years ago. Keitel was in Belgrade for its International Film Festival. He was presented with a special Golden Locomotive Award.

Campbell 'regrets' posing naked for Madonna book

LONDON (AFP) — British supermodel Naomi Campbell has expressed "regrets" for posing naked in the pages of "Sex," pop star Madonna's book of steamy photographs. "My mum and grandma were embarrassed," she told the latest edition of the magazine Esquire — for whom she also agreed to a photo shoot — adding: "I'm learning from my mistakes."

Alligator captured in Cologne

COLOGNE, Germany (AFP) — Police captured an alligator measuring almost a metre (over three feet) in length near a main road in this western city. The reptile, identified as a caiman, was taken to Cologne Zoo in an armoured car, police said. Its owner was not identified. Police speculated that it could have been cast out of the Rhine, which flows through the city, during historically high floods last week.

'Racist' Bugs Bunny video withdrawn

LOS ANGELES, California (AFP) — The MGM-UA film company has agreed to withdraw from sale a video containing a Bugs Bunny cartoon made during World War II which expresses racist attitudes towards the Japanese. The video, a compilation representing a history of animation, contains a cartoon entitled Bugs Nips The Nips which portrays the cartoon hero offering booty-trapped, ice cream cones to a group of Japanese people. As the encourages them to accept, he speaks to them using such terms as "bowlegs," "monkey-face" and "slant-eyes." Around 8,000 copies of the video compilation have been sold since it went on sale in September 1983. The company decided to withdraw the video after receiving complaints from the Japanese-Americans Citizens' League.

Charles to be patron of U.N. celebrations

LONDON (R) — Prince Charles will be the British patron of celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of the United Nations, the organisation said. The United Nations Association said the heir to the throne will preside over several events including the 50th anniversary of the first U.N. General Assembly on Jan. 11, 1996. "We are truly delighted that Prince Charles has agreed to act as our patron," said Lord Howe, president of the British committee for the commemoration. "With his deep commitment to fostering international understanding he will play a key role in ensuring that this important anniversary receives the recognition which it deserves."

5-year-old brings handgun to school

WASHINGTON (R) — Police took into custody a five-year-old boy in Maryland after he took a loaded semi-automatic handgun to his elementary school and showed it off to his classmates, police said Saturday. A teacher at the school in Prince George's County, outside Washington D.C., confiscated the .380 calibre weapon Friday after she saw the boy showing it to a group of other students in the back of a classroom, a police spokesman said.

Diana starts Japan visit quietly

TOKYO (R) — Britain's Princess Diana, demure again in her trademark hair-cut, began a return to full royal duties here Monday and received the blessing of a child who thought she was Cinderella.

Leaving behind in Britain for the moment alleged scandals in her personal life and looking ahead to a new independent royal role, the princess rarely let a smile slip from her face from the moment she arrived at Tokyo Airport.

The four day visit on behalf of the Red Cross has been tailored to show off the caring side of a princess known for a jet-set life of glamour but a private life of woe.

After a new book detailed suicide bids, problems with the eating disorder bulimia and the breakup of her marriage to the heir to the British throne Prince Charles, Princess Diana withdrew from public life a year ago.

The Japan visit is part of her comeback.

For her first engagement, a visit to a children's hospital in a Tokyo suburb, she dressed for the part in a pale pink suit and string of pearls. She replaced a Madonna-like sleek haircut she wore last week with the familiar "princess di" cut.

At the hospital, Erina Sarumi Sakaguchi, a six-year-old girl suffering from muscular atrophy, gave the princess a card with a picture of a rabbit and a message that she was pleased to meet the princess.

"I told her a princess was coming and she thinks Diana is Cinderella," said her mother Sachiko.

The princess visited a cancer ward where the terminally ill children dress in pink and have pink bed clothes and decorations to cheer them up. In another ward children had prepared a banner saying "welcome to SC, Princess Diana", writing her name in the Japanese pronunciation.

The last time Princess Diana came to Japan was with Prince Charles to attend Emperor Akihito's enthronement in 1990.

She was rapturously re-



Britain's Princess of Wales puts two children on the head as she talks with Hospital President Professor Kobayashi during a visit to the National Children's Hospital in Tokyo. Earlier the princess had flown into the Japanese capital to start a four-day visit, and a lunch and four of some wars was her first official engagement (AFP photo)

ceived them as a symbol of European glamour and elegance.

This time the trip is far more low-key. She is forging a new public role as patron of the 125th anniversary celebrations of the British Red Cross and as a member of the advisory commission of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Though she will meet the imperial family, there are no other high-profile social events planned.

Many Japanese, though still fond of her, find it awkward to deal with her in a country where broken marriages are still frowned upon and unheard of in the imperial family.

About 150 well-wishers turned out to greet her at the hospital, far fewer and quieter than the mobs that followed her on her previous visits in 1986 and 1990.

Still, a hard core of Di fans remains loyal, including some still sporting her haircut.

"She's a good mother and she's got a great figure — that's how all women yearn to be," said Kazuo Nishimura, 55, an admirer since her daughter was studying in Britain and sent her a book of photographs of the princess.

"It's great that she's doing this kind of work and not letting herself be beaten down. I wish her well."

Inside the hospital the princess told an audience she admired the courage and optimism of people in Kobe where more than 5,000 people died in an earthquake three weeks ago.

"In the midst of this most terrible devastation, it was wonderful to see neighbours come to the help of those who needed it and to witness the strong sense of community in the rescues," she said in a speech that started with greetings in Japanese.

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Hand for rusty league

THE FORTHCOMING visit of the Arab League Secretary General Ismat Abdul Meguid to Jordan would certainly provide an ample opportunity to raise with him several key issues on how to render his organisation more effective and efficient. As is, the Cairo-based league is anything but fruitful or cost-effective. Created in the mid-forties to deal with a set of existing Arab problems, it remained nearly static in its procedure and basic rules. In the process, the vision of the league also remained anachronistic against the backdrop of contemporary Arab conflicts and disputes. As for its goal to realise full Arab coordination and the streamlining of Arab aspirations, the league proved time and again impotent and unresponsive to the new challenges. There is hardly an Arab capital that does not share the view that the league is long overdue for a major overhaul in terms of its Charter or its methodology of work. Uppermost on the mind of Jordan is also the creation of an Arab Court of Justice to settle inter-Arab disputes, a proposal to which much talk has been devoted without any real prospect for real action in that direction. We cannot agree more on the urgent need to institutionalise the Arab ways of resolving their quarrels, which happen to be so many, and there is no better way than the establishment of an inter-Arab tribunal for this purpose. In the same vein, we think the Arab World also needs an Arab human rights commission or court along the lines of the Inter-American Human Rights Commission or the European Human Rights Court. Of course, all such basically good proposals cannot be expected to see the light of day given the lack of political will on the part of the major Arab countries to put their ultimate trust in a regional Arab institution. From the look of things, the Arab countries are no where near yielding some of their sovereignty rights to an Arab regional organisation just as the Europeans and Latin American countries have done already. This problem should not, however, prevent us from pursuing our objectives even though we know that they cannot be attained in the near future.

In all cases, springing the league back to life requires first and foremost the amendment of its Charter, as Jordan has insisted for a long time, so that decisions can be taken by a majority vote instead of the archaic unanimity or consensus rule currently being applied for the adoption of the league's resolutions. As long as Arab policy decisions cannot be taken in a democratic way, there can be no hope to introduce the necessary changes that all the Arabs agree should be made. We think that the government should prepare a thoroughly articulated file on this subject, containing all necessary ideas and proposals, so that the visit of Mr. Meguid to the country next month could turn out to be positive instead of just ceremonial.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I daily Monday welcomed the news about reported Saudi forces withdrawal from the Yemeni borders. The withdrawal was vital for restoring peace between the two neighbours and necessary for averting a conflict that would only deal a serious blow to Arab solidarity, said the paper. Indeed, the Arab states are in need to address the damage that was caused to the Arab Nation as a result of the Gulf crisis, which harmed the interests of Arab people, said the daily. By avoiding a new tragedy and opting for reason and brotherly dialogue, the leaderships in Sana'a and Riyadh have displayed wisdom that will benefit the Arab World at large, said the daily. Lauding the current efforts to secure a permanent solution to the border dispute, the paper said that there can be no winners in conflicts between two Arab states and only through peaceful dialogue can all Arab problems be resolved and tragedies averted.

AL DUSTOUR daily said the Jordanian-Egyptian-Palestinian meeting in Cairo to discuss coordination of policies with regard to the Palestine refugees question was significant not only because the issue at hand is vital for the aspired peace, but also because it was the first coordination meeting since the Oslo agreement of 1993. Regretting that so much precious time has been lost before the three countries came together to discuss the refugee problem, the paper said that the meeting was necessary before the foreign ministers of the three countries meet with the Israeli foreign minister later this month. Since Israel holds different views regarding the refugees problem from those of the Arab countries, the Arab side can better negotiate with the Israelis through a joint stand and concerted effort, continued the paper. The meeting manifested the Arab sides' concern over the fate of the refugees.

The View from Fourth Circle

Onion rings, paper crowns and the meaning of fences

I FOUND it intriguing yesterday to read in the local newspapers several separate news items that seemed to deal with very different issues, but that, in fact, reflected a common dynamic. The items were about an Israeli parliamentary team visiting Amman for talks with Jordanian officials, U.S. Commerce Secretary Ron Brown visiting the region to promote greater U.S.-Middle East business contacts, our minister of social development stressing the need to focus more on tackling poverty in Jordan, our information minister stating that all aspects of our state-owned local media are being reviewed, and the aftermath of the financial collapse in Mexico that generated a \$50 billion international rescue package.

The common denominator among these different stories, in my view, is the raising of the following fundamental questions: Will the post-peace Middle East open itself to Western commercial forces to such an extent that our region will primarily become an appendage to the U.S.-dominated global marketplace of popular culture and consumer commodities? Or, rather, will we have the fortitude to work for the combination of political democratisation, intellectual honesty and greater socio-economic equity that present themselves as a viable antidote to the commercial-cultural bazaar that increasingly beckons us from the West?

This struck me as a rather urgent question a few weeks ago when I was in the Gulf region visiting a small Arab country that prided itself on maintaining the cultural identity of its people, especially their native dress. Only medical doctors, nurses, commercial aircraft pilots and armed forces personnel, as far as I could see on many previous visits to this country, wore Western-style uniforms during working hours. In January 1995, however, the lines of cultural identity had been breached suddenly and dramatically: Scores of native young Arabs working in Burger King restaurants had discarded their traditional clothes and were wearing blazing red Burger King uniforms, complete with little paper crowns.

Much as I enjoy Burger King food (double whoppers with cheese and small portion of onion rings are my favourite, and, after baseball, they form the point of optimum convergence between my Arab nationalist political sentiments and my firm commitment to constructive, mutually satisfying cultural interaction with the West), I was still shocked by the symbolism of what I had seen: an ancient, strong Arab culture had discarded perhaps its most powerful day-to-day symbol of its identity — its clothes — for the sake of conforming to the profit dictates of American-style fast food outlets. What was next to come? Would little girls dress up as extra large portions of French fries and prance across our television screens? Who amongst us would be the next to drop our own, old ways, to don the outfits created and loved by the impersonal money markets of the West, and eternally to dance for dollars?

This is only one example, perhaps a weak one, of the single most important danger that I see confronting most Arab societies, including ours in Jordan: the danger that in our haste to prod economic expansion and avert the spectre of large-scale poverty and its attendant political tensions, we are surrendering with perhaps undue haste towards the poles of Western, specially American-dominated cultural commercialism and market economics. This runs the

double risk of aggravating the cultural alienation that is already a big problem in most Arab countries, while promoting economic growth that is of questionable durability and equity.

We seek foreign investments and business interaction with Israelis as important elements in our economic well-being and salvation. It seems to me that we over-emphasise the importance of foreign investments (perhaps because we value the political vote of confidence that comes along with foreign money?). The rush to offer ourselves to foreign parties as an attractive investment and business partner should be preceded by a far more diligent effort to correct those distortions that plague us at home.

"The impact of further economic liberalisation and open foreign investments on the Jordanian poor, without an effective domestic policy that targets poverty alleviation as a top priority, is likely to be negative and immense, given the experience of many others around the world."

This brings up the issue of the quality of our state-owned information media which the new information minister — a learned man of letters — has rightly said needs reassessment. The great unknown, however, is in which direction our media will move, given that the state-owned Jordanian television service is already in the process of disseminating CNN, BBC, and assorted foreign music and entertainment channels. I find it odd that our national television service should be facilitating access to alternatives to its own output, instead of improving Jordan Television to the point where it can credibly compete for its own domestic audience.

Why does this strangeness happen in an otherwise intelligent, impressive country like Jordan? The answer, I believe, lies in the imbalanced interaction between the forces of our identity and the attractions of the Western consumer bazaar. No doubt, it's a lot more fun for young Jordanians to watch a rock and roll band or an NBA slam dunk contest than to sit through an interview with an agriculture ministry extension agent in a distant Jordanian province recounting his office's services to farmers. It may

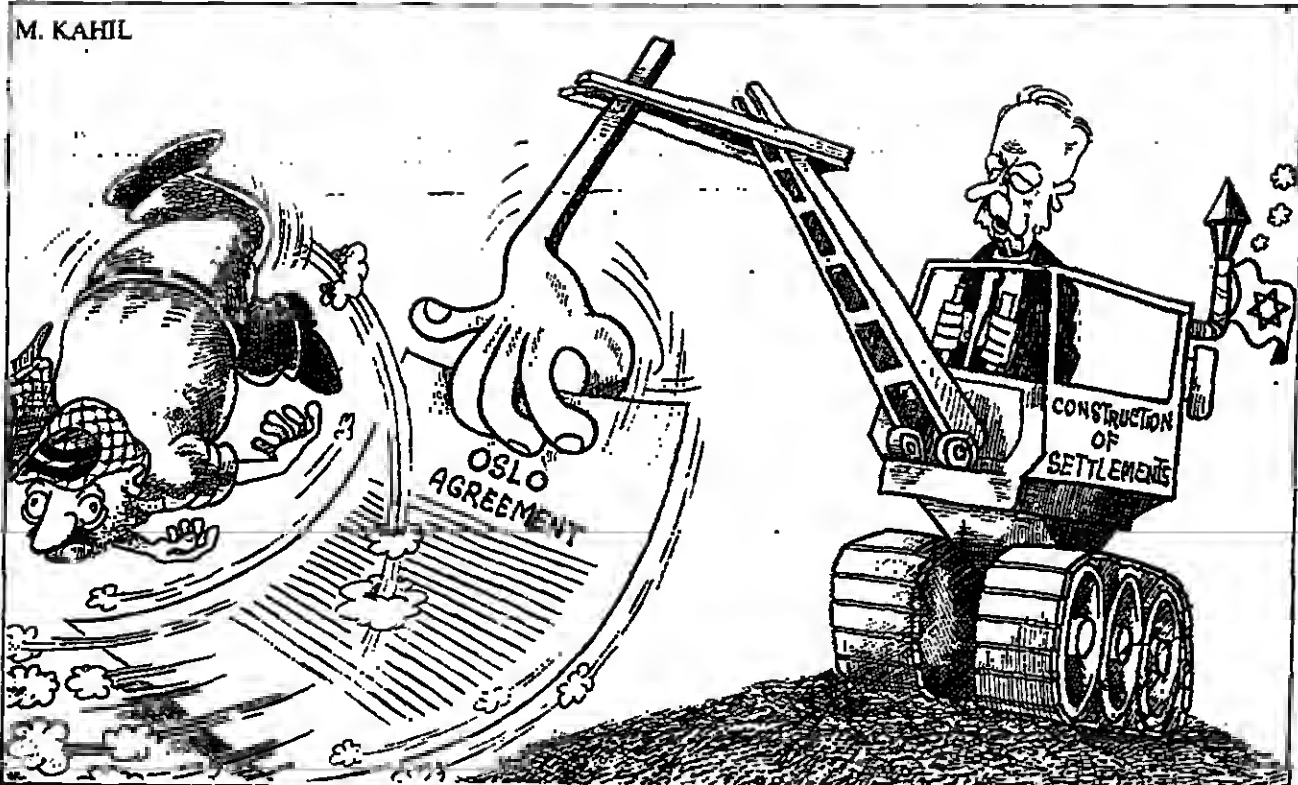
also be more profitable or simply easier for those who dominate the local commercial power structure to act as salesmen and commission agents for Western entertainment media, than to make the effort required to bring Jordanian output up to Western standards of technical excellence and intellectual credibility.

My fear is that continued Westernisation of our commercial marketplace, without unlocking the forces of creativity and hard work that are within us, will merely perpetuate the trends that have brought us to the point today where we have to run after foreign assistance and investment in order to expect a better future. The Mexico experience looms large in this respect; it should make us cautious about embracing foreign investments as the main cure to our economic weaknesses. The cost that Mexicans have paid for their foreign investments, in terms of poverty and helplessness, are enormous. They will now be compounded by the effective desovereignisation of Mexican oil, which will be in the hands of Mexico's international creditors as collateral for the \$50 billion rescue package. Poverty rises, the currency collapses, and sovereignty dissipates ever so slightly in Mexico today.

The impact of further economic liberalisation and open foreign investments on the Jordanian poor, without an effective domestic policy that targets poverty alleviation as a top priority, is likely to be negative and immense, given the experience of many others around the world. Moreover, the latest, most important lesson for us, given that the international lending agencies during the past decade have trumpeted Mexico as an example of successful economic adjustment. If I am not mistaken, some of our own officials were mentioning the Mexican precedent a few years ago as perhaps applicable to Jordan, in terms of debt rescheduling. It is rather troubling, but not coincidental, to note today that the two places in the world where people speak seriously of erecting fences to separate communities are along the Mexican-U.S. border and along the Palestine-Israeli border — at the moment when we in Jordan view the U.S. and Israel as important business investment partners in the immediate future. We need to ponder the meaning of such fences, and why it is that we seek to be warmed by the economic fires of the fence-builders of our planet.

This suggests to me that we should value caution and prudence, and forebode haste. Economic liberalisation, foreign investment and cooperation with Israel are all goals that I support and that I have spoken for over many years. These goals remain valid, but they are not sacred; in order to be constructive for Jordanians in an equitable and sustainable manner, they should be approached in a manner that draws far more on the ideas, sentiments and concerns of ordinary Jordanians.

The interplay between healthy economic growth and greater political participation is widely confirmed through studies and experiences in all parts of the world. We would appear odd if we thought that we in Jordan were somehow exempt from the laws of nature and the cumulative experience of humankind — perhaps not quite as odd as an Arab child wearing a Burger King crown and dancing for dollars, but pretty close. Hey, Charlie, I'll have one Double Whopper with cheese and a small order of onion rings, an extra portion of sovereignty on the side, and please hold the servitude.



Rabin government unwilling to pay the price for peace

Only the U.S. can stop settlement activity

By Michael Jansen

THE RECENT decision by the Israeli cabinet committee on settlements to permit the immediate completion of 800 housing units for settlers at the Maale Adumim colony east of Jerusalem and of another 1,000 units over the next two years demonstrated in no uncertain terms that the Rabin government was not prepared to pay the price in land for peace with the Palestinians. And it showed that this committee, which includes two notable "doves," Shulamit Aloni and Amnon Rubinstein (who apparently took a seat slated for Shimon Peres), is no more in a position to impose control than the Minister of Housing. Be-

nyamin Ben Eliezer, criticised for permitting building to go on without restriction.

Indeed, the very fact that Mrs. Aloni and Professor Rubinstein serve on this committee and have agreed to this decision demonstrates that they and the entire "peace lobby" in Israel has been swamped by the instant public opinion gains the right-wing made from the bomb explosion at Natanya. Both Meretz ministers have been highly critical of settlement expansion and made the point that, in principle, their party opposed settlement activity. Clearly, principles have gone out of the window. Indeed, their presence on the committee gives it a credibility and legitimacy that it would not have if they were not represented.

Recently "freedom of settlement," like the Israeli army, has become sacrosanct; perhaps even a majority of Israelis now support the rightist contention that "Jews must be free to settle anywhere in the land of Israel," the portion of Palestine captured in 1967 as well as the Israeli "proper" of 1948.

Although this was a slogan raised by the Likud and

its right-wing allies more than a decade ago — a slogan unpopular with a majority of Israelis who were antagonistic to the settlers because they were subsidised at the expense of the Israeli taxpayer — it has been taken up by the Labour and Meretz parties because they now find themselves in the pre-campaign period for the 1996 election.

The committee's decision would seem to contradict the statement made recently by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin that Maale Adumim, Betar, the Etzion Bloc and Giv'at Ze'ev should not be considered a part of the "Greater Jerusalem" area. By giving into settlers' demands for continued construction in Maale Adumim, the committee has signified that these blocs have been placed in the same category as the areas in and around East Jerusalem, annexed by Israel as part of its "eternal," undivided and unshared capital in 1967.

Furthermore, the government is expected to include at least these settlements within the proposed security fence, or fences, designed to "separate" Jews and Palestinians. Their inclusion would create a thick

belt of fenced territory and round Jerusalem, sealing it off from the Palestinian population of the occupied West Bank and Gaza and preventing Arab East Jerusalem from ever becoming the capital of a Palestinian state.

Although the Palestine National Authority has protested these Israeli activities, there is little the Palestinians can do to stop the Israelis from going ahead. Only the U.S., as Israel's paymaster at the rate of \$6.37 billion a year, would be in a position to compel Mr. Rabin to exercise some restraint. However, according to an informed interpretation of the pledge Mr. Rabin made in 1992 to Washington (the Bush administration), Israel is permitted to expand without restraint its holdings within the Israeli-defined and administered "borders" of "Greater Jerusalem" and in the Jordan Valley. Furthermore, there are no obstacles to an annual "natural growth" of 1-2,000 units in the rest of the West Bank, nor the Israeli expropriations for "security purposes," particularly of "state lands" which account for about 60 per cent of the West Bank and 40 per cent of Gaza.

Franco-Algerian ties in crisis

By Paul Taylor
Reuter

PARIS — Relations between Algeria and France, its former colonial power, have been plunged into crisis over President Francois Mitterrand's suggestion of a European-sponsored peace conference for the North African state.

Algeria's military rulers, waging a brutal war against Muslim fundamentalist insurgents, recalled their ambassador from Paris on Saturday and summoned the French envoy, while the official Algerian media lambasted Mr. Mitterrand for "interference".

State radio accused Mr. Mitterrand, who was interior minister in 1950s French governments that tried to eradicate Algerian nationalism, of "visceral hatred of independent Algeria".

President Liamine Zerrouk's policy "will be the rock on which Mitterrand's attempt will be smashed," the radio said.

The invective compounded a crisis of confidence between Paris and Algiers opened by the Christmas eve hijacking of an Air France plane by Islamic gunmen at Algiers airport that left bitter feelings on both sides.

The French, convinced Algerian leaders were lying to them, threatened to cut off financial aid to force them to let the plane fly to Marseille, where French commandos stormed it and freed the hostages.

France then suspended air and sea passenger services to Algiers until security was improved.

Officials said Mr. Mitterrand, who retires in May, overstepped government policy when he voiced "a hope, not yet a policy" that the European Union (EU) could hold a conference based partly on a platform for a ceasefire and democratic elections adopted by Algeria's secular and Islamic opposition parties last month.

The French foreign ministry took the unusual step of saying it had no comment whatsoever on Mr. Mitterrand's suggestion, and an official called it "not a plan, a speech."

Foreign Minister Alain

Juppe and Defence Minister Francois Leotard previously expressed support for the dialogue among the former ruling National Liberation Front (FLN), the Socialist Forces Front (SFF) and the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), which was on the verge of victory when the army intervened to scrap a 1992 general election.

There are several theories why Mr. Mitterrand, who discussed the conference idea on Thursday with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, aired it publicly in the presence of European Commission President Jacques Santer and French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur on Friday.

Firstly, the French are determined to use their six-month EU presidency to raise Europe's diplomatic profile.

It was the second French initiative in a week after Mr. Juppe proposed a new international conference on former Yugoslavia. And the activist foreign minister is off to the Middle East this week to seek a peace-making role there for Europe.

Secondly, Mr. Mitterrand may calculate that the mere threat of European involvement, possible linking a dialogue in some way to the continuation of financial aid, may be sufficient to press Algeria's rulers into opening their own peace negotiations.

Thirdly, the Socialist Mitterrand may have been tempted to exploit differences over Algeria in the conservative government with which he shares power.

Mr. Balladur, front-runner to succeed Mr. Mitterrand, has struggled to reconcile hardline Interior Minister Charles Pasqua's support for the Algerian generals and rejection of any compromise with the FIS with Mr. Juppe's advocacy of a hands-off policy encouraging the Algerians to settle their civil strife through dialogue.

The prime minister now faces the awkward choice of whether to back Mr. Mitterrand's idea or try to ignore it.

Featu
Censorship no longer easy to spot
By Ed McCullough
The Associated Press
CARACAS, Venezuela — Censorship in Latin America used to be easy to spot. Military regimes of the 1960s, 70s and early 1980s simply took over the press, down newspapers and broadcast stations they considered offensive. Some used censors to monitor coverage.
In the worst cases, reporters were slain. Their stories were rarely brought to light.
With the emergence of democratic governments in almost everywhere in the region, media freedom has leaped forward. Last year, newspapers are more vigorously investigating government officials for corruption and other wrongdoing.
The best-known cases led to the impeachments of presidents Fernando Collor de Melo in Brazil and Carlos Andres Perez in Venezuela.
Government interference, however, has not disappeared. Censorship — at least the threat of it — is just more subtle.
In Venezuela, congress passed a law in December that requires reporters to join the national reporters' guild or face jail. Under the press law, reporters must also have a university degree.
Lawmakers in Colombia recently approved legislation ordering T.V. stations to give prominent time to opposing points of view on face heavy fines.
Congressmen pushed for the law because they said T.V. stations were making unsubstantiated allegations. Lawmakers were being accused of corruption and bike-taking, but no proof was presented.
President Carlos Menem of Argentina has endorsed slander legislation pending in the senate that carries steep penalties. He said the law is needed to protect the good name of people unjustly accused of crimes.
Publishers claim the real aim is to suffocate investigative reporting that in recent years has included accusations of corruption against members of the government. Mr. Menem's family and his Peronist Party.
Despite the opposition of news groups, many reporters endorse or see no harm in laws requiring them to have university degrees and belong to a guild. They say it is useful to improve the status of journalists, who tend to be poorly paid and trained.
Some newspapers in Caracas pay reporters the equivalent of a few hundred dollars a month. "That's why so many are young and why those with any experience leave" for jobs in other fields, said Gregorio Salazar, president of the National Union of Press Workers.
Editors, writers and academics disagree.
"In the United States of America, you don't have to be a journalism graduate or belong to a guild to work," said Arturo Uslar Pietri. "In Venezuela, it's a restriction and a big one... They created a 'closed shop'."
Brazil, Ecuador and Colombia have similar laws. Censorship can take subtle forms.
In Mexico last November, the pro-government union that has a legal monopoly on sidewalk sale of newspapers boycotted Reforma, hampering its distribution.
The ostensible issue was whether the paper could go to press on a legal holiday. Journalists suggested the real issue was Reforma's independent editorial voice.
President Alberto Fujimori of Peru boasts that the press is free in his country. But critics say public advertising is parceled out mostly to pro-government media.
More ominously, the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists says 13 Peruvian reporters are in jail for alleged violating an anti-terrorism law. Reporters were slain last year in Mexico, Brazil and Colombia.
Still, many people feel progress towards freedom of the press.

Inter-Arab trade remains low despite incentives

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Trade among Arab countries has remained a fraction of their total commercial exchanges despite incentives offered by a regional fund created three years ago to support flagging internal trade.

Official figures obtained showed exports within the 22-member Arab League stood at around \$12.88 billion in 1993, representing nearly nine per cent of total exports, which amounted to \$142.3 billion.

Internal imports reached \$11.1 billion, accounting for

around 8.7 per cent of the total imports of nearly \$126.6 billion in 1993, according to the figures compiled by the Abu Dhabi-based Arab Monetary Fund (AMF).

Internal exports were even down from \$14.5 billion in 1990, despite the creation of the Arab Trade Financing Programme (ATFP) in that year.

ATFP, set up by the AMF with a capital of \$500 million, has provided more than \$250 million in credits for trade deals among Arab nations since it was established.

The figures showed demand was lagging far behind the fund's financing capacity of \$1 billion a year.

"It seems political rifts are still affecting trade among Arab countries. This is one of the main reasons for the low demand," a Gulf official said.

ATFP finances only home-produced goods, with the aim of encouraging Arab exporters and reviving the ailing economies of some Arab League members. Oil is not included.

ATF has also been involved in setting up a database linking all Arab markets

to provide information on prices and products for importers and exporters.

Officials have acknowledged that the programme is not enough to tackle the problem of low inter-Arab trade.

They blame political differences, high customs tariffs, the poor infrastructure of some members and the problems of bureaucracy, communications and storage.

AMF officials said boosting trade among Arab nations was essential to achieve economic integration and ultimately a common market.

Trade has remained low even within regional groupings, despite measures to remove customs barriers and ease travel for individuals.

In the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), internal exports of \$7.3 billion in 1993 accounted for only 7.1 per cent of their total exports of around \$102 billion. Internal imports stood at only \$5.1 billion, compared with a total of around \$67 billion.

The problem also affects North Africa's Maghreb Union, which groups Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Morocco and

Mauritania.

Exports among them were estimated at \$819 million compared with total exports of nearly \$30 billion. Internal imports stood at around \$860 million compared with a total of nearly \$29 billion.

In contrast, the European Union accounted for 28.8 per cent of total Arab exports and 41.1 per cent of Arab imports.

Japan, the second commercial partner of Arab states, accounted for 16.6 per cent of their exports and 9.3 per cent of their imports, according to official figures.

Clinton '96 budget skirts painful spending cuts

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton proposed a \$161 billion budget Monday designed to woo the politically vital middle class by promising new tax breaks, but no tax increases or cuts in popular programmes like the Medicare system of medical care for the elderly.

But the budget plan, which projects deficits of around \$200 billion through the end of the decade, has already come under harsh criticism from Republicans who are demanding far greater spending cuts to achieve a balanced budget by 2002.

Labour Secretary Robert Reich said Monday it was too early to discuss whether the Clinton administration would accept further public spending cuts under Republican pressure.

"First we have to see what the Republicans are coming up with," he said on ABC television. "They talk a lot about more tax cuts and more budget cuts. But they have not yet come up with anything."

Mr. Clinton's proposed budget for fiscal year 1996, which begins Oct. 1, includes \$63 billion in middle class tax breaks and \$144 billion in spending cuts over five years.

The tax breaks include \$500 tax credits for children aged 13 or under in families with incomes of less than \$75,000, tax deductions for some college tuition and a new individual retirement account programme.

If the five-year budget plan were implemented, the White House forecasts that the federal deficit would be \$196.7 billion in fiscal 1996 and \$194.4 billion in 2000. The deficit would be \$213 billion in 1997, and then drop back slightly below \$200 billion through the year 2000.

"Our agenda is working. By cutting the budget deficit, investing in our people and opening world markets, we have begun to lay the foundation for a strong economy for years to come," Mr. Clinton said in his budget message.

The budget makes no new spending cuts in the federal Medicare or Medicaid (medical care for the poor) programmes — the fastest growing federal programmes — and makes only minor cuts in farm subsidies.

Iraq will be short of revenue even after oil embargo — experts

NICOSIA (AFP) — Iraq's oil revenue after the lifting of U.N. sanctions will not be enough to meet the country's minimum needs, according to a team of specialists on the Iraqi economy.

The Iraqi Consultancy Group (ICG) said oil revenue was expected to generate a net \$11.4 billion annually in the first five years, after production costs and based on output of 2.5 million barrels a day (b/d) and a price of \$15 a barrel.

But annual payments would amount to at least \$12 billion, leaving a minimum deficit of \$600 million a year.

The specialists, headed by former Iraqi industry minister Adib Al Jadir, published

the analysis in the ICB's annual report, quoted Monday by the Cyprus-based Middle East Economic Survey newsletter.

Out of Iraq's income, it estimated \$4 billion would go to Gulf war compensation, \$3 billion to servicing the \$60 billion foreign debt, \$3 billion on food and medicine, and \$2 billion on repairs and reconstruction.

"Hence, the projected oil revenue during the first five years of production... cannot in any way help to deal with the deteriorating economic conditions as exemplified by the runaway inflation, collapsing currency and huge unemployment," the report said.

"The Iraqi government is aware of the difficulties ahead, hence the negotiations with a score of foreign companies to raise capacity... to around 5.5 million b/d by the end of the decade," it added.

The ICB said the sanctions had been a failure.

"The sanctions policy alone, without an overall campaign to change the regime in Baghdad, is harmful to the Iraqi people and the State of Iraq as a national and political entity," it said. "It is not acceptable that this policy of mass punishment of 18 million people should be continued, and that the Iraqis should be forgotten until further notice."

UAE boosts spending on services to face demand

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE), a main OPEC oil producer, is expected to spend more on services to meet rising demand due to a growth in the population and the industrial sector.

The 1995 federal budget, unveiled last week after a one-month delay, projected total allocations for services at around 6.68 billion dirhams (\$1.82 billion) compared with 6.48 billion dirhams (\$1.76 billion) last year, according to budget details from the finance and industry ministry.

The expenditure covered mainly salaries, maintenance and expansion for the education, health, water and electricity, social affairs and housing sectors.

The increase has forced the federal government to raise total 1995 spending by nearly two per cent despite a stated policy of rationalising expenditure because of a sharp decline in oil prices over the past decade.

The 1995 budget was projected at 17.94 billion dirhams (\$4.88 billion) compared with 17.6 billion dirhams (\$4.79 billion) last year.

"This year's budget will be slightly higher than the 1994 budget due to increased spending on growing services and other development needs," Minister of State for Finance and Industry Ahmad Al Tayer said last week.

A breakdown showed the education ministry was the main beneficiary, with allocations of around 2.92 billion dirhams (\$795 million) in 1995. Allocations for health stood at 1.31 billion dirhams (\$356 million) and for labour and social affairs at 672 million dirhams (\$183.1 million).

The rest benefited the public works and housing, agriculture, communication, information and culture and sports and youth.

In contrast, allocations for development projects stood at only 965 million dirhams (\$262.9 million), nearly six per cent of the total spending.

The figure covers only 54.7 million dirhams (\$14.9 million) for new projects as the rest were allocated for completing existing projects.

The agricultural sector grew by 9.6 per cent in 1994 and the construction industry by nearly 8.1 per cent, according to official figures.

Abu Dhabi is the biggest and wealthiest emirate in the UAE as it produces nearly 80 per cent of the country's total oil output of around 2.16 million barrels per day.

Officials said the increase in development needs was caused by a steady growth in the population, which rose from around 2.08 million in 1993 to 2.23 million in 1994. The planning ministry projects it at 2.4 million in 1995.

The industrial sector has also steadily grown due to a government drive to diversify its oil-reliant economy. Growth stood at around 11 per cent in 1994 and 9.2 per cent in 1993.

The director general of the Amman Financial Market (AFM) issued new regulations for brokerages, to be effective as of May 1, 1995. Under these regulations, brokerages should collect the fee of their deals from customers within one week from the day of effecting a contract. Also, accounts either receivables, or payable could not exceed 200 per cent of the brokerages' net capital and total obligation. A brokerage should not exceed 250 per cent of the net capital. Other regulation emphasised that any withdrawals or deposits made by partners in a brokerage should be clearly pointed out and that withdrawals by partners should not exceed 20 per cent of the brokerage's net-up capital. Concerning liquidity, the regulation stipulated that brokerages maintain liquid or near liquid assets that, at least, cover 100 per cent of short-term liabilities (Al Ra'i).

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Lebanon's growth slows in 1994 — central bank

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon's economic growth slowed in 1994 despite a healthy balance of payments surplus and a strong growth in foreign currency reserves, the central bank said Monday.

The Bank of Lebanon said an indicator it introduced last year to measure economic activity in the absence of reliable official statistics was seven points higher in December than a year earlier.

"Although some problems were evident in some sectors in 1994, the economy continued to expand but at a slower pace than in 1993," the bank said in its monthly report for December.

On the plus side, net foreign exchange reserves nearly doubled to \$2.7 billion in 1994 and the country registered its second successive

balance of payments surplus of more than \$1 billion, it said.

Money supply growth also dropped to 25 per cent as the authorities tightened controls and fought inflation, the bank added.

Its economic indicator showed that activity slowed slightly in December for the second straight month, registering 142.6 compared with 142.9 in November.

Lebanon has had no official economic statistics by which to measure growth since the 1975-90 civil war.

The bank's coincident indicator of economic activity, which takes January 1993 as 100, peaked at 152 in October. It combines a number of activities including imports, exports, electricity output and airport and port activity.

Bank Audi, a leading commercial bank, said last week the economy grew an estimated 8.5 per cent in 1994.

It did not give the basis for the estimate and said the rate was not very impressive after a period of stagnation but it showed Lebanon was on the road to sustained recovery.

The central bank said net foreign reserves rose 88 per cent in 1994 to \$2.73 billion despite a \$345 million drop in December caused by a run on the Lebanese lira when billionaire Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri tried to resign.

Net reserves stood at \$1.449 billion at the end of 1993.

The bank said it intervened to hold the exchange rate of the lira against "waves of pressure" caused by the political crisis.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY FEBRUARY 7, 1995

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) If you consider the ideas and position of the other fellow today, you find that you can quickly come to a fine understanding with those of whom you have had an argument of late.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) If you give undivided attention to business affairs at hand now, you can expand as is your desire. Take interest in family and good friends later in the day for progress there.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Make it a point this morning to do something nice for a higher up that will truly please and also ingratiate yourself to the general public and to those who can be helpful to you.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Look to a charming personality with the ideas that can help you get ahead faster or to some person from out town who is equally well informed.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Financial affairs should be of first importance to you today so you will soon have a greater abundance in the future time ahead.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) If you show a true attitude of cooperation now, you find that associates in any sphere of your endeavours will be more helpful and thoughtful. Accept an invitation this evening.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Speak clearly and precisely in order to get the cooperation of fellow associates this AM, otherwise there's apt to be much confusion and you won't know what is causing the problem.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Here is a day and night when you can really enjoy yourself, after you have quickly and efficiently attended to important tasks that need immediate attention.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Wisely sticking to methods and principals that have proven successful in the past will bring even greater rewards today.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Gleaning information you need is fine now as well as being more firmly convinced of the expediency of your own plans and ideas.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) It is important that you study and handle financial affairs more wisely if you are to get the full benefits that are possible today.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) A fine day for sitting down with associates and discussing affairs thoroughly until you reach a perfect understanding. Go to lunch or dinner in a charming spot and forget the expense.

Birthstone of February: Amethyst — Onyx

Peanuts

SOMEDAY, I'M GOING TO LIVE IN A BIG HOUSE WITH A FIREPLACE, AND ON CHRISTMAS EVE I'LL HANG MY STOCKING ON THE FIREPLACE AND SANTA CLAU'S WILL COME AND FILL MY STOCKING WITH WONDERFUL PRESENTS...

IN THE MEANTIME, MY ARM IS FALLING OFF!

Andy Capp

COMING TO BINGO, FLO?

CAN'T, RUBIE, I'M WITH ANDY

JUST LOOK AT HIM, HE DOESN'T NEED YOU!

HE DOES, RUBIE

IF HE CARRIED ON LIKE THIS WHEN I'M HERE, WHAT WOULD HE BE LIKE IF I WASN'T?

Mutt'n'Jeff

KNOCK KNOCK

HELLO! I'M THE INSIGNIFICANT SIGNATURE!

OH -- WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

YOU BELONG AT THE BOTTOM END OF THIS STRIP!

IF YOU DON'T MIND I'D LIKE TO GET INTO THE ACT ONCE IN A WHILE!

EVERYBODY WANTS TO GET INTO THE ACT!

THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen

GLASBERGEN

"Stinky feet are good for you! The smell keeps flu germs away!"

JUMBLE By Hannel Arnold and Mike Arginton

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

POUMI

CAMKS

JUNIER

LABBUE

Print answer here: " " " " " "

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: FRANC FLUTE THROAT MOSQUE

Answer: Why they believed the mathematician's conclusion — HE WAS ON THE SQUARE

THE Daily Crossword by Matthew Higgins

ACROSS

1 At a distance

3 Wistful forecast

10 Davenport

14 Gertie's home

15 Exponent

18 Life — of bricks

20 Presidential race step, often

22 Brick carner

23 Woody's rival

24 Brittle

25 Cell

26 G — George

28 Refute

29 Country or social end

30 Snoggin

32 Under water

33 Snides' rock

34 Musical

35 Presidential race step, always

36 Annoys

37 Delect

40 Ryan or Dunne

41 Boccia's affliction

42 Dynamic

43 Frying pan

44 Begged

45 Paperlike cloth

46 Muree usability

48 One's Gor.

50 Mineral spring

53 Presidential race term, once

56 Repair roads

57 Modules

58 In good shape

59 Standout

60 Mermal

61 Frank

DOWN

1 Colleague's sacred liver

2 Card game

3 Surrounded by

4 Speed letters

5 Carousals

6 Faithful

7 Beasts

8 Shattered

43 Precious possession

10 Gown material

11 Elevator man

12 Lumb

13 "— and the King of Siam"

18 Inference

19 Student's aid

25 Sudden wind

26 Sudden wind

27 Poem division

28 Desiccated

31 By oneself

33 Supply for the future

34 Heat chambers

38 In good spirits

39 Patched

42 Shattered

43 Most sensible

44 Cheapsears

45 Lutz

46 Stamping grounds abstr.

47 Fast, light

48 Adorn

49 Director Kazan

50 TV staple

51 North or South

52 So be it

53 Feminine suffix

55 Greek letter

From about 6,271 unemployed registered last year, a Jordanian Employment Office, which is part of the Ministry of Labour, the office managed to find work for 128 persons of whom 16 were holders of B.A. degrees from various universities. The number of unemployed with a B.A. degree was 21, while the number of those with junior certificates and diplomas from community colleges stood at 793. The bulk of the jobless, 5,298 persons, were at the Tawjihi level and below (Al Ra'i).

A committee from the Ministry of Supply has been formed to study the cost of producing fresh cow milk and examine any change in the prices of fodder or veterinary drugs that might affect the production cost of milk. Farmers sell fresh cow milk for 90 fils a kilogramme for the farm and for 210 fils to dairies under a fixed price from the Ministry of Supply (Al Ra'i).

A number of fuel distributors has been referred to the Specifications and Standardisation Corporation. The distributors are found to be swindlers, having manipulated the quantity of fuel sold to consumers through various fraudulent means. Those involved were 14 fuel distributors, two fuel stations and two gas distributors (Al Ra'i).

Jordan Steel Co. is expected to start commercial production in October this year. The company will be able to produce 120,000 tons a year of reinforced steel, which has a JD 15 billion capital, is expected to provide 150 job opportunities (Al Aswaj).

business daily beat

A review of economic news from the Arabic press

Fate of glass plant undecided

★ The minister of labour denied that a decision had been taken to liquidate the glass factory in Ma'an. He explained that winding up the plant was still under study because the company employed many workers who had rights which should be examined objectively. The minister said the final solution to this troubled company rests with the government which is still considering the recommendation of liquidation without any indication as to when a decision will be taken. Should liquidation be taken, the minister pointed out, it is envisaged that the workers will be transferred to other government companies within the same region (Al Ra'i).

★ The Telecommunications Corporation will begin implementing its privatisation programme in early March. A study concerning this process is currently being examined at the Prime Ministry and a team of British experts are preparing the work system and methods that will be followed in the future (Al Ra'i).

★ The director general of the Amman Financial Market (AFM) issued new regulations for brokerages, to be effective as of May 1, 1995. Under these regulations, brokerages should collect the value of their deals from customers within one week from the day of effecting a contract. Also, accounts either receivable, or payable should not exceed 200 per cent of the brokerages' net capital and total obligations on a brokerage should not exceed 250 per cent of the net capital. Other regulations emphasised that any withdrawals or deposits made by partners in a brokerage should be clearly pointed out and that withdrawals by all partners should not exceed 20 per cent of the brokerage's paid-up capital. Concerning liquidity, the regulations stipulated that brokerages maintain liquid or near liquid assets that, at least, cover 100 per cent of short-term liabilities (Al Ra'i).

★ From about 6,271 unemployed registered last year at the Jordanian Employment Office, which is part of the Ministry of Labour, the office managed to find work for 5,128 persons of whom 167 were holders of B.A. degrees from various universities. The number of unemployed with a B.A. degree was 211 while the number of those with junior certificates and diplomas from community colleges stood at 793. The bulk of the jobless, 5,298 persons, were at the Tawjihi level and below (Al Ra'i).

★ A committee from the Ministry of Supply has been formed to study the cost of producing fresh cow milk and to examine any change in the prices of fodder or veterinary drugs that might affect the production cost of milk. Farmers sell fresh cow milk for 200 fils a kilogramme at the farm and for 210 fils to dairy plants under a fixed price from the Ministry of Supply (Al Ra'i).

★ A number of fuel distributors has been referred to courts by the Specifications and Standardisation Corporation. The distributors were found to be swindlers, having manipulated the quantity of fuel sold to consumer through various fraudulent means. Those involved were 14 fuel distributors, two fuel stations and two gas distributors (Al Ra'i).

★ Jordan Steel Co. is expected to start commercial production in October this year. The company will be able to produce 120,000 tonnes a year of reinforced steel of different sizes. Jordan steel, which has a JD 15 million capital, is expected to provide 150 job opportunities (Al Aswak).

Speculators sell metals; copper below \$2,800

LONDON (R) — The world price of copper fell below a key market support level at \$2,800 per tonne Monday after speculative funds cashed in on a recent boom and sold.

Some fund money seems to be deserting industrial metals for revived bond and stock markets, traders on the London Metal Exchange (LME) said.

That may ease worldwide

inflationary pressures. One factor behind investors' anxiety about metals is a rise in interest rates. Both the United States and Britain raised rates last week to preempt inflation.

The consequent brake on economic activity could reduce demand for industrial raw materials.

Copper was bid as low as \$2,785 Monday. This was

around \$60 down from late levels on Friday and almost \$300 below a 54-year high of \$3,081 hit as recently as mid-January.

Aluminium and nickel prices also dropped.

"All the metals have been breaking down," said Wolfgang Becker of Merrill Lynch Metals in Hamburg.

"It looks like the funds are continuing to sell commodities and look to get back in to the bond and equity markets," he added.

Some traders say thin trading may have exaggerated Monday's shake-out and fundamental supply-demand factors, as economies around the world continue to expand, should support the metals.

Copper demand from the electrical and vehicle industries remains brisk. Market analysts think that the "bull-run" in metals will probably resume after the present sharp correction.

But they say speculative funds show profits of perhaps \$1,000 a tonne in markets like copper, notched up as they rebounded last year from recession-led lows of the early 1980s.

Copper and aluminium both gained around 75 per cent in value during 1994. So it may make sense for the funds to cash in now and reinvest in other assets rather than gamble on perhaps \$200 per tonne more in commodities.

Aluminium prices held up

somewhat better than copper on Monday, just above \$2,040 per tonne after \$2,100 late Friday.

Stocks of aluminium, in demand in the construction industry, have fallen faster than those of copper this year.

Nickel took a hammering to below \$8,800 per tonne. It has been as high as \$10,500 recently on strong demand for making stainless steel and interest from funds.

As selling hit base metals, gold bullion traded steadily just above \$375 per ounce. Reversing stock markets have lured money out of base metals and London bullion traders said this was keeping money out of gold and putting a lid on gold prices.

China to crack down on car smuggling in '95

BEIJING (R) — China will crack down this year on the smuggling and illegal assembly of cars after more than 60,000 contraband vehicles flooded in last year, the Xinhua news agency has said.

The number of smuggled cars fell slightly in 1994 but the influx was still serious and the problem of illegal assembly was also severe, it quoted Chen Ping, deputy general manager of the China Trading Centre for Imported Cars, as saying.

In 1994, China's official imports of cars were 237,000, while the total entering was well over 300,000 if confiscated smuggled cars were included. Mr. Chen gave no estimate of how many smuggled vehicles evaded confiscation.

He gave no details of what measures would be taken to stem the influx of contraband cars, usually luxury models seen as a status symbol among the new rich and officials of state units.

In recent years, the prop-

ortion of luxury cars in China's imports has soared — mainly of Mercedes Benz, Toyota Corollas, Lexus, Cadillacs and Lincolns. In recent years, medium-class and luxury cars have accounted for 80 per cent of imports.

Many of the Mercedes Benz and Lexus carry military or police licence plates. Beijing mounted a high-profile campaign against luxury cars last year, ordering senior officials across the country to turn in their imported models for less ostentatious domestically produced vehicles.

Smuggled and illegally assembled cars usually sell for well below the normal market price. The difference for some passenger cars exceeded 100,000 yuan (\$12,000) and this was "seriously obstructing the auto market", Mr. Chen said.

China charges import duties of about 100 per cent on imported cars.

Financial Markets

in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency New York Close 3/1/95 Tokyo Close 6/1/95

Sterling Pound 1.5635 1.5597

Deutsche Mark 1.5270 1.5276

Swiss Franc 1.2936 1.2936

French Franc 5.2930 5.2933

Japanese Yen 99.65 99.55

European Currency Unit 1.2338 1.2338

USD Per 100 1.2338 1.2338

Forward Interest Rates Date: 6/1/1995

Currency 1 MTH 3 MTHS 6 MTHS 12 MTHS

U.S. Dollar 6.61 6.60 6.61 6.62

Sterling Pound 6.37 6.36 6.37 6.31

Deutsche Mark 4.75 4.81 5.06 5.50

Swiss Franc 3.43 3.75 4.00 4.31

French Franc 5.43 5.60 5.97 5.47

Japanese Yen 2.06 2.12 2.18 2.37

European Currency Unit 5.66 6.00 6.31 6.87

Forward Interest Rates Date: 6/1/1995

Metal USD/Oz JD/Gm Metal USD/Oz JD/Gm

Gold 375.50 7.30 Silver 4.67 0.110

General Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 6/1/1995

Currency Bid Offer

U.S. Dollar 0.7010 0.7030

Sterling Pound 1.0934 1.0989

Deutsche Mark 0.4584 0.4607

Swiss Franc 0.5409 0.5436

French Franc 0.1322 0.1329

Japanese Yen 0.7032 0.7067

Dutch Guilder 0.4085 0.4109

Swedish Krona 0.0434 0.0436

Belgian Franc 0.0434 0.0436

Other Currencies Bid Offer

Bahraini Dinar 1.8430 1.8630

Lebanese Lira 0.041950 0.042860

Saudi Riyal 0.1862 0.1882

Kuwaiti Dinar 2.3500 2.3650

Qatari Riyal 0.1916 0.1933

Egyptian Pound 0.2000 0.2130

Omani Riyal 1.6080 1.6360

UAE Dirham 0.1908 0.1925

Greek Drachma 0.2425 0.2520

Cypriot Pound 1.4025 1.5115

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South African Davis Cup number one Wayne Ferreira returns the ball against Australian Patrick Rafter at the Westridge tennis stadium in Durban on Monday (AFP photo)

Davis Cup

Sweden stages amazing comeback

LONDON (AP) — Defending champion Sweden, one of only two countries in the history of the Davis Cup World Group to win a match after being down 0-2, did it again Sunday as Stefan Edberg and Jonas Bjorkman led a 3-2 victory over Denmark.

Bjorkman, playing in place of the ill Magnus Larsson, nearly blew a 4-0 lead in the fifth set before beating Frederik Fetterlein 6-7 (5-7), 6-4, 6-7 (5-7), 6-3, 6-4 to clinch the contest.

Earlier, world No. 9 Edberg had tied the score at 2-2 with a 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, 7-6 (7-3) victory over Kenneth Carlsen.

"If I had lost both games against the Danes, I just wouldn't have survived," said Edberg, who lost to Fetterlein on Friday.

It was only the fourth time that a team has come from 0-2 down to win a World Group match since its introduction as the top level for Davis Cup play in 1981 — and three of the four times it was an Edberg-led Sweden team that pulled it off.

The Swedes did it against Canada in the first round in 1992, and again against the United States in last year's semifinals. Mexico also came back from 0-2 against Switzerland in a relegation round match in 1988.

Bjorkman, ranked 47th on the ATP tour, was called into service when the 16th-ranked Larsson pulled out with an upset stomach. After Bjorkman and Edberg lost their singles matches Friday, Bjorkman and Jan Apell won the doubles Saturday to set up the thrilling finish.

Cederin, ranked No. 125, rallied to cut Bjorkman's lead to 3-4 in the final set before dropping the final game on the indoor carpet at Copenhagen.

"I was very close to making it in the final set, but he (Bjorkman) was the best," said Fetterlein.

Elsewhere in the World Group, six matches were decided by a 4-1 score: Russia over Belgium, Netherlands over Switzerland, Austria over Spain, Italy over the

Czech Republic, Germany over Croatia, and United States over France.

Australia took a 2-1 lead over South Africa in a delayed contest.

Austria 4, Spain 1: On hard court at Vienna, Thomas Muster overpowered world No. 4 Sergi Bruguera 6-4, 7-5, 6-3 to give Austria a winning 3-1 lead before Alexander Antonitsch put away Carlos Costa 6-3, 6-4.

Bruguera called it "the best match that Thomas has ever played against me."

"I don't know why the Davis Cup brings out the best in me," said Muster.

Italy 4, Czech Republic 1: The matches on the clay at Naples were virtually the only sports event in Italy not canceled on Sunday. The nation called off virtually everything else after a fan was killed at a soccer game last weekend.

Italy advanced when Andrea Gaudenzi defeated Salva Dosedel 6-3, 6-2, 4-6, 6-2 in the first of the reverse singles. Renzo Furlan completed the contest by beating Czech Daniel Vacek 3-6, 7-6, (8-6), 6-2.

United States 3, France 1: At St. Petersburg, Florida, saying he was just happy to make up his "embarrassing" performance on Friday when he lost in straight sets to Cedric Pioline. Todd Martin served 20 aces to beat Guy Forget 6-3, 7-6 (7-4), 7-6 (7-5) and clinch the American victory.

It was Forget's third loss in as many days. Jim Courier finished off the win with a 6-4, 6-3 win over Cedric Pioline.

Russia 4, Belgium 1: On clay at Antwerp, Johan Van Herck gave Belgium its only victory of the weekend, beating Yevgeny Kafelnikov 6-7 (2-7), 6-3, 6-1. Andrei Chesnokov earned the final point for Russia, which held an insurmountable 3-0 lead after Saturday's doubles, with a 6-7 (5-7), 6-2, 7-6 (7-2) victory over Kris Goossens.

Netherlands 4, Switzerland 1: On clay at Geneva, Richard Krajicek routed

Swiss debutant Lorenzo Manta 6-4, 6-4, 6-2 to clinch the Dutch victory, and Jan Siemerink followed up by winning 6-4, 6-3 over Patrick Mohr.

Switzerland's fate was all but sealed Friday when 15th-ranked Marc Rosset, leading his opening singles match against Jacco Eltingh, retired from the match with a broken foot. He'll be out for up to three months.

The 236th-ranked Manta replaced Rosset in both the doubles and the reverse singles, and Switzerland lost both matches.

Germany 4, Croatia 1: On hard court at Karlsruhe, Germany's Michael Stich won his third match of the weekend, 7-6 (7-4), 7-6 (7-4), over Sasa Hirzon. Stich also won his singles match Friday and played doubles Saturday.

Earlier, Goran Ivanisevic picked up Croatia's only point when he won a battle of big serves against Markus Zoccke, 6-4, 7-6 (7-4).

Boris Becker, who also won in singles Friday, said he will play in the next round against the Netherlands. The German Tennis Federation is trying to get Becker to commit to a 3-year Davis Cup contract worth 9 million marks \$6 million.

Australia 2, South Africa 1: The South Africans prepared a special sand-and-gel surface to frustrate the "woodies" but it didn't work. Doubles pair mark Woodforde and Todd Woodbridge overwhelmed Wayne Ferreira and Pietie Norval 7-5, 6-3, 7-6 (7-5).

Underdog South Africa, playing its first World Group contest since being expelled from the Davis Cup in 1979 because of apartheid, had hoped to even the odds by holding the match in the hot, humid Indian Ocean port of Durban on a slow artificial surface.

But Woodforde said experience won out.

"We're a top team and we can play anywhere on any surface," the Australian said.

Shaquille leads Magic over Knicks

ORLANDO (AP) — It was a game the New York Knicks were looking forward to. It was a chance to show Orlando exactly who the defending conference champions were, a chance to prove to the Magic that reputations are not made in the first three months of the season.

But when it came time to play their best ball of the season — in overtime, at Orlando arena — the Knicks came up with a big zero.

New York shot 0-for-10 from the field in overtime and lost to Orlando 103-100 Sunday.

"There was an anxiousness on our part once we got back and tied it," said Knicks coach Pat Riley. "Then it's about focus and about patience and execution. We did not have to push the throttle down."

Shaquille O'Neal won another personal duel with Patrick Ewing, scoring 41 points and grabbing 15 rebounds to Ewing's 38 and 13.

Nick Anderson had 15 points, Anfernee Hardaway 13 and Dennis Scott 12.

In other games, Houston beat Phoenix 124-100, Seattle beat Miami 136-109, Chicago beat Golden State 97-93, Charlotte beat Washington 111-105 and Boston beat Minnesota 115-82.

In the Orlando-New York game, Dennis Scott broke a 98-98 tie with a 3-pointer, and Anfernee Hardaway made a pair of free throws with 11.1 seconds remaining as the Magic outscored New York 5-2 in the extra period.

Ewing, who hit a 3-pointer late in regulation and a clutch baseline jumper to send the game into overtime, missed another 3-point attempt with two seconds left in the extra period.

John Starks scored 21 points for New York, which never led. Derek Harper added 20 points.

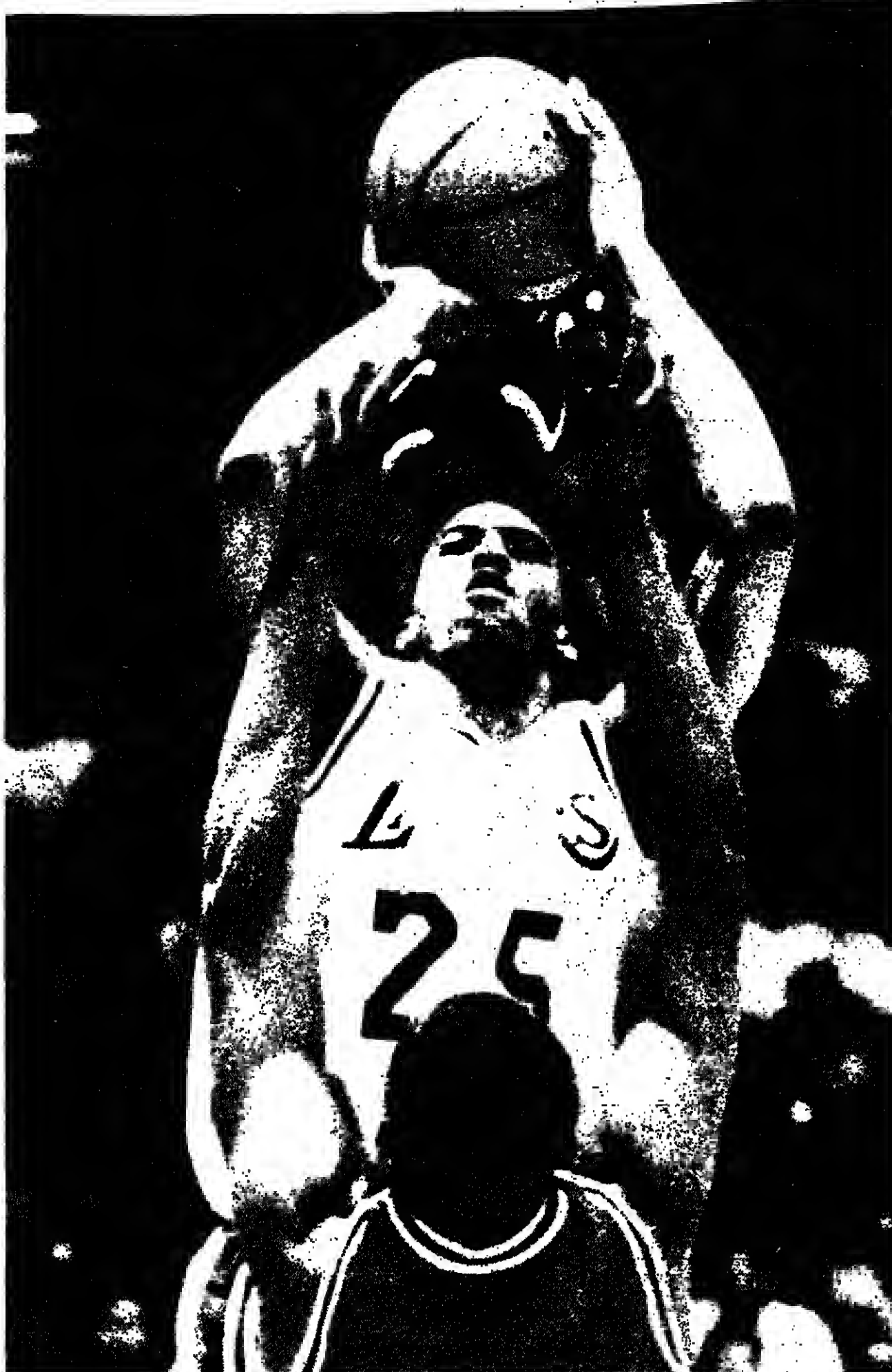
Rockets 124, Suns 100: At Phoenix, Hakeem Olajuwon had 28 points, 11 rebounds and three blocks and Sam Cassell and Vernon Maxwell were a combined 9-for-14 from 3-point range as the Rockets showed the form that made the NBA champions last season.

"I thought the real Houston Rockets showed up for this game," Maxwell said. "It was just a great game for us. We got the post play out of Hakeem, and the guys on the outside were knocking down the 3s."

Houston became only the third team to defeat Phoenix at home this season and the first to beat the Suns twice.

"They shot 12-of-24 from 3-point land," said Charles Barkley, who had 24 points, 11 rebounds and seven assists. "There isn't much you can really do about that. They shoot 12-for-24, they're going to beat us every time. We've got to make a decision what to do about that monster in the middle."

Supersonics 136, Heat 109: At Miami, the Sonics notched their 10th straight road win and their 14th win in 16



Eddie Jones of the Los Angeles Lakers lines up a shot over the outstretched arms of Corie Blount of the Chicago Bulls (AFP photo)

games overall.

Seven Seattle players scored in double figures, led by Shawn Kemp with 26 points and 11 rebounds. Kendall Gill had 21 points and Delf Schrempf and Gary Payton added 18 apiece.

The Sonics hit four 3-pointers in the first period and six of their first eight to blow the game open early.

"That's the best we've seen a team play against us all year," Miami coach Loughery said. "It's the best team I've seen this year."

Bulls 97, Warriors 93: At Oakland, California, Scottie Pippen scored 35 points and Chicago won despite blowing an early 24-point lead.

The Bulls were up 95-88 with 1:48 to play and still nearly lost. Tom Gugliotta made a 3-pointer and Tim Hardaway hit two free throws after Pippen fouled out, cutting the deficit to 95-93 with 50.5 seconds to play.

After B.J. Armstrong came up short on a 15-footer, the Warriors had a chance to tie, but Keith Jennings missed a layup with 20 seconds to go. Armstrong was fouled and hit two free throws to end the scoring.

Time Hardaway led the Warriors with 28 points. Gatling scored 23 points in 27 minutes before being ejected with 9:09 to play.

Hornets 111, Bulls 105: At Charlotte, North Carolina, Robert Parish hit two free throws and Dell Curry sank a long jumper in the final 38 seconds to extend Charlotte's winning streak to six games.

Alonzo Mourning got 26 points and 10 rebounds for Charlotte. Curry, Larry Johnson and Scott Burrell added 16 apiece.

"It wasn't a particularly good game for us, but we came up with enough good plays to win," Charlotte coach Allan Bristow said. "It's a game we probably wouldn't have won last year, and that shows you how much character we have developed this season."

Inwan Howard led Washington with 23 points. Calbert Cheaney had 20 and Chris Webber had 16 points, 12 rebounds, eight assists and three blocks.

Celtics 115, Timberwolves 82: At Boston, Dee Brown scored 16 of his 23 points in the second quarter when Boston pulled away.

Brown and Eric Montross scored Boston's first 20 points of the period and the Celtics turned a four-point lead into a 55-31 advantage with 4:08 left in the half. Boston never trailed by fewer than 18 after that.

Isaiah Rider led Minnesota with 18 points but was just 7-for-23 from the field.

RESULTS

Orlando 103, New York 100, OT.
Seattle 136, Miami 109
Charlotte 111, Washington 105
Houston 124, Phoenix 100
Boston 115, Minnesota 82
Chicago 97, Golden State 93

AFC overpower NFC to win Pro Bowl

HONOLULU (AP) — Marshall Faulk, the only rookie in the game, ran for 180 yards to Shatter O.J. Simpson's 22-year-old Pro Bowl record Sunday when the AFC overpowered the NFC 41-13.

In the concluding game of the NFL season, the Indianapolis Colts star carried 13 times and scored on a 49-yard run to top Simpson's record of 112 yards rushing in the 1973 Pro Bowl.

Seattle's Chris Warren also went over the previous rushing mark with 14 carries for 127 yards for the AFC, which rolled up 400 yards on the ground against the NFC's all-star defense.

Tight end Eric Green of Pittsburgh had two touch-

down receptions as the AFC, whose champions have lost 11 straight in the Super Bowl, won the Pro Bowl for the third time in five years.

The AFC defense gave up just 309 yards of offense to the NFC, only 41 yards rushing.

Green caught a 22-yard scoring pass from Denver's John Elway in the second quarter, helping the AFC rally from a 10-0 deficit. He then had a 16-yard TD reception from the Los Angeles Raiders' Jeff Hostetler in the final quarter, when the AFC broke the game open with three touchdowns.

Steve Young of San Francisco, the MVP of the 49ers' 49-26 Super Bowl victory

over San Diego a week earlier, helped stake the NFC to a 10-0 lead in the first quarter, but a third-quarter field goal by Minnesota's Brad Rupp was the only other NFC scoring.

Faulk made several spectacular runs, including a 41-yarder early in the fourth quarter. On his 49-yard touchdown, off a fake punt, he stripped tacklers in the secondary in breaking free for his team's final touchdown.

Cleveland's Leroy Hoard put the AFC in front to stay when he threaded his way through the defense on a 4-yard touchdown run for a 17-10 lead 2:07 before halftime.

Ferrari unveil F1 challenger

MARANELLO, Italy (AP) — Ferrari on Monday unveiled its needle-nosed challenger for the 1995 Formula One World Championship with which, said Ferrari President Luca Di Montezemolo, "we must really come back and win."

The famous team has not won the Championship since 1979.

Built "rigorously" to the new 1995 aerodynamic and engine rules, the 412 T2 was unveiled without key aerodynamic elements "to give other teams the least possible time to study our ideas," said British chief designer John Barnard.

It features a new V 12 3 litre engine, 10 kilos lighter

than the previous 3.5 litre unit, but Ferrari are also working on a V 10 engine. Team Director Jean Todt said that the engine would be run first towards the end of April and road-tested in mid-season.

Barnard said he had designed the 412 T2 to accept the V10 with little modification, but he felt it would be "unrealistic" to expect to race it this year.

Italian ski star Alberto Tomba joined drivers Gerhard Berger and Jean Alesi, and test driver Nicola Larini, for the formal presentation, and Montezemolo asked Tomba to touch the car "to instill your winning spirit."

| Cinema | Tel.: 634144 | Cinema | Tel.: 699238 | Cinema | Tel.: 677420 | Tel.: 618274 - 618275 | Tel.: 675571 | Nabil & Hisham's | Tel.: 625155 |
|---|--------------|--|--------------|--|--------------|---|--------------|---|--------------|
| PHILADELPHIA | | PLAZA | | CONCORD | | AMMOUN THEATRE | | Nabil Al Mashini Theatre | |
| Yusra, Mahmoud Hamedieh in The Immigrant Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 | | Bruce Willis...in DIE HARD II Shows: 12:30, 2:30, 8:30, 10:30 The movie: THE LION KING will be shown on Fridays and Thursdays at 11:00 a.m. & 12:30 p.m. | | CONCORD '1' ROBOCOP '3' Shows: 12:30, 2:45, 6:30, 8:15, 10:30 CONCORD '2' Sylvester Stallone — Sharon Stone in The Specialist Shows: 2:45, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 | | SUM'A in the satirical play HI CITIZEN Composed and directed by Mohammad Al Shawagfeh Daily from 8:30 p.m. Children's Play The Ninja Turtles Show Directed by Akram Abul Regheeb Daily at 10:30 p.m. | | Presents Abu Awwad in the social comedy Punctured Bag The theatre is closed on Mondays Tickets are available all day | |
| | | | | | | | | Presents: AL SALAM YA SALAM at 8:30 p.m. For reservation, please call 625155 The theatre is closed on Saturdays & Sundays | |

Figure skating championships end with money in the future

DORTMUND (AP)—A the end of a European Figure Skating Championships week in top talent, the sport's governing body is considering using money to keep the best skaters at its competitions.

Surya Bonaly of France took her fifth European title in the absence of Olympic champion Oksana Baiul, who skipped to the pro ranks. The Ukrainian is still uncertain about applying for reinstatement to the ISU after turning pro soon after her victory in Lillehammer.

"Prize money is part of the game today," Ottavio Cinquanta, the president of the ISU, said Sunday. "I can't understand, with so much money to the ISU such as the TV rights (why) we can't give some money back to the skaters."

The International Skating Union said Sunday that it will consider giving cash prizes in future championships in an effort to keep the top skaters from turning pro early.

Cinquanta said that the next ISU council meeting in Birmingham, England, during the world champions next month, will be looking into various prize proposals. Then they will be recommended for acceptance at the ISU Congress in 1996.

"A market is a market. If an ineligible skater has better conditions than we will have to work out things to give more motivation to stay with us," Cinquanta said.

Cinquanta said that it was fine for skaters to perform in exhibitions or shown, that it they are involved in a competition, it must be according to ISU rules and judges in order for the competitor to stay eligible.

"We have to control our sport," Cinquanta said. "The thing we have to offer is the title and that is what the pros have going in."

The title at the European Championships were split among four countries with a 17-year-old Russian, Ilya Kulik, taking the men's title.

Kulik was asked if he intended to leave the sport early if he should win a world title, like Baiul.

"It's difficult to say," Kulik said. "Life is full of surprises. But my plans are to partici-



Finnish ice dancers Susanna Rahkamo and partner Petri Kokko perform at the European Figure Skating Championships (AFP photo)

pate in the Olympics... not only in the coming one, but beyond that," the 1988 Olympics are in Nagano, Japan.

Booaly was wavering on whether to go to the pro ranks earlier this season. But a deal arranged between the French Skating Federation and a French Television Network gives her a million francs a year (\$190,000) for staying eligible through the next Olympics.

"We can't block a human being from making a personal decision," Cinquanta said. "What the ISU can do is to protect its own organization."

The skaters who were reinstated last year, such as Katarina Witt and Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean, have returned to the pro ranks.

Italy pays respect to victim of fan violence

ROME (AP) — Italians headed to soccer stadiums as usual Sunday. But this time, the gates were locked.

No crisp passes, no diving saves, no controversial referee calls.

And no fan clashes. The decision to ban professional sports on Sunday after a fatal stabbing in Genoa last week forced Italians to try other activities and reflect on the violence.

Some carried flowers and others simply strolled past stadium gates on the nation's first game-day without soccer in half a century.

Olympic stadium — scheduled site of a match between third-place As Roma and Internazionale di Milan — instead hosted an impromptu parking-lot game between children.

Two teenagers, Roma fans, chatted nearby. One, a season-ticket holder, said he could think of nowhere else to go on a Sunday.

Giovanni Altobelli, walking his dog along the arena's perimeter, took note of the

silence. "It's all very calm today," he said.

Inside, prowling cats replaced spectators and birds' chirps filled silence normally drowned with the raucous cheers of "ultras," the Italian equivalent of British soccer hooligans.

A policeman leaned against his kiosk at the stadium entrance, smoking a cigarette rather than undertaking his usual job: controlling unruly fans.

He said thinks the one-day ban is proper "out of respect for the loss of a young life" but quickly added that violence will return when the fans do — "in another seven days."

Italian authorities called off Sunday's soccer league matches and other professional sports events in response to the Jan. 29 death of a fan before the Genoa-AC Milan game. A 19-year-old Milan supporter was charged with the slaying, which touched off demands to crack down on violent fans.

The change in activity was

obvious throughout the capital on Sunday.

Cafe patrons drank to music, not the widely-followed play-by-play radio broadcasts. There was not the familiar site of men hunched to hear their transistor radios — the only way to follow the afternoon matches in Italy because they are not televised.

Television stations showed movies rather than the regular soccer talks shows. Newspapers published guides to activities for people caught without their accustomed 90 minutes of soccer.

Elsewhere, about 1,000 people attended a memorial mass in Cosenza for Vincenzo Spagnolo, the stabbing victim. The service began at 2:30 p.m. to coincide with scheduled game starts.

Outside the Genoa stadium where Spagnolo was killed, an estimated 3,000 people — including hundreds of "ultras" donning team scarves — visited a makeshift memorial dotted with flowers, flags and handwritten



A lone soccer supporter stands in front of the closed and empty Milan "San Siro" Stadium at the first Sunday without championship matches in Italy as national mourning takes place for the young supporter, killed last Sunday (AFP photo)

signs.

In a town outside Florence, people gathered to protest stadium violence.

Some even pretended there were games.

The Corriere Dello Sport newspaper published "updated" first-division standings based on phone-in poll of fan predictions of what game results would have been had they been played.

The paper's editor, Italo Cacci, doesn't believe the matches should have been cancelled.

"Cancelling soccer was a serious mistake," Cacci said.

"It is like giving a title of honour to the violent fans. It shows them they can bring the game to its knees."

But many Italians disagree, noting that a day of reflection is good for the soccer-obsessed country.

Nearly 80 per cent of respondents to a survey published in the Gazzetta dello Sport thought the Italian soccer league should take Sunday off.

The paper's Sunday supplement carried a full-page headline echoing the words of Spagnolo's father: "One should not die for a game."

"It's really a tragedy what happened in Genoa," said Carlo Morelli, a Rome shop owner. "Today is for thinking about what sports should be about, bringing people together."



A bouquet of flowers has been placed on the stands of Genoa's Massar Stadium, commemorating the death of a Genoa supporter a week ago, killed by a Milan soccer team supporter (AFP photo)

Aircraft carrier unusual entry in America's Cup

SAN DIEGO (AP)—So you thought sailing was a genteel sport?

How would you like to look up and see a 94,000-ton (85,000 metric ton) nuclear-powered aircraft carrier emerging from dense fog smack in front of you?

That's what happened Saturday during America's Cup racing off Point Loma. The navy isn't quite sure how the USS Abraham Lincoln wound up so close to the 75-foot (23 meter) elite racing boats — two were racing and two more were lining up to race — but America's Cup officials were miffed by the whole experience.

"How she wandered in there I don't know," race director Pat Healy said. "We were anchored out there for an hour. It wasn't as though we were hiding in the bushes."

"They've got instruments on there that can see a body in the water and I don't know why they didn't see us," he said.

Commander Mike Thurwanger, a navy spokesman, said the ship may have been travelling closer to the shore because of the dense fog, but he said it was doing everything right given the poor visibility — traveling slowly, using additional radar and extra lookouts. The ship was on its way to naval air station north island.

"If the race was not going on, it would have been a very appropriate place for her to be," he said. "I don't believe she was aimlessly drifting around looking for a hole in the fog."

Still, the ship's crew apparently did not realize the ship had entered the course until after its forward lookout peered down and saw a yellow race buoy.

The ship then came to a halt about 200 yards (180 metres) from the starting line, in the middle of the

course, and after 1 (hours of maneuvering, passed through the area. Thurwanger said none of the racing yachts, or spectator boats were in danger.

The Lincoln had apparently been made aware of the general area in which the races were taking place, but may not have been apprised of the exact latitude and longitude of the race course, he said.

"We believe there may have been some more accurate information provided through other sources," he said. "That's what we're investigating, if the Lincoln had that on board."

At the time of the intrusion by the thousand-foot ship, two boats were already on the 18.55-mile (30 km) course, and OneAustralia and Japan's Nippon Challenge were beginning their pre-start maneuvers in the second race.

"It was pretty scary at first and then we realised they were able to stop," said Peter Gilmore, sailing coach for the Japanese syndicate Nippon Challenge. "Still, it's incredible that they could make such an error."

Young America rallied during the last leg Sunday to defeat Stars and Stripes on the America's Cup Defender course, ending a five-race victory streak for Dennis Conner's boat.

Young America had fallen behind by more than two minutes because of a tangled sail, but caught Conner's dark blue boat on the home stretch.

"It is always nice to come back," said Young America skipper Kevin Mahaney.

After a strong start in the competition, Young America has struggled lately. Sunday's



Tag Heuer's Bowman Kevin Bowman (centre) prepared for a sail change while rounding the windward mark to head down wind in her race against Rio de Espana during the America's Cup Challenger's race off the coast of San Diego (AFP photo)

win snapped a three-race losing streak.

The match with Stars and Stripes started well for Mahaney's boat. In patchy 5 to 6 knots of breeze, Stars and Stripes headed left and Young America sailed right with a two-second edge at the gun.

Up the first leg, Young America seemed to find the better wind on its side of the course and cleared out to a 1 minute, 56 second lead at the top mark.

"It was very light and shifty," said Mahaney. "We were seeing huge differences in velocity, with two breezes fighting each other. And I think we had a little speed edge on Dennis."

But trouble struck for the syndicate from Bangor, Maine, at the end of the first run. During a down wind tack, or gybe, its sail twisted into an hourglass shape. As the sail was dropped to clear the tangle, a halyard twisted around the mast causing more problems. Young America continued on with a

partly set sail.

Under full sail, Stars and Stripes took advantage of the mess on board its rival and moved into the passing lane to lead by 29 seconds at the second mark. Conner's boat stretched its lead to more than two minutes over the next two legs.

In the light conditions, Young America fought back and on the final upwind leg Mahaney had closed the gap to 23 seconds.

"Much of it was the shifting wind, being in the right place at the right time," Mahaney said.

To the surprise of Stars and Stripes, Young America moved ahead and clinched a comfortable lead, and crossed the finish line 1 minute, 46 seconds in front.

"It's not a big deal, but it's not the world's most pleasant thing," said Stars and Stripes co-helmsman Paul Cayard about giving up the lead on the last leg. "But it is a four-month-long regatta and worse things than that are going to happen to the winner."

On the Louis Vuitton Challenger Course, John Bertrand's OneAustralia retired from its match against Japan's Nippon Challenge after a spreader bar, which holds the steel lines supporting the mast, snapped.

"It went off like a cannon," said skipper Bertrand.

Nippon was awarded the two points for the victory by completing the 18.55-mile (30 km) long course.



The crew of Young America prepares to set a spinnaker while turling the windward mark to head downwind in her race against Stars and Stripes during the America's Cup Challengers (AFP photo)

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Beckenbauer rejects Nike, signs with Adidas

MUNICH (AFP) — Franz Beckenbauer has signed a 20 million German mark deal (\$13 million) to promote Adidas sportswear for 10 years, rejecting approaches from American company Nike. Beckenbauer, World Cup winner as a player and manager, has been tied by contract to Adidas for years but the Americans offered him more money to promote their line of sportswear. But Adidas agreed to match the offer for Beckenbauer, now president of football league club Bayern Munich, his manager Robert Schwann told the German daily Bild.

Meola signs with Rio team

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — The U.S. World Cup team goalie, Tony Meola, will return to playing soccer for a Brazilian club after failing as a National Football League kicker. Rio's Botafogo Club announced the signing late Saturday of Meola, who has recently been working as an actor. Meola will fly to Rio de Janeiro this week to pose with his new jersey, the Rio daily O Globo reported Sunday. Meola will only begin playing in March, the Rio daily added.

Flamengo hit six without Romario

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — Romario's new club Flamengo proved they could manage without him when they hammered Freiburg 6-0 in the Rio de Janeiro championship at the weekend. Freiburg, one of several lightweight outfits in the competition, were in trouble from the second minute when key defender Pereco was sent off for a professional foul. With Barcelona signing Romario not yet fully match fit, Flamengo's goals were shared among five players. Freiburg defender Arildo supplied the sixth with an own goal. Brazil full back Branco scored the most spectacular goal when he rifled in a 25-metre shot from outside the area in the last minute.

Nantes, Rovers slip up

LONDON (R) — The pressure of being out in front in tough European League competition took its toll on Nantes of France and Blackburn Rovers in England at the weekend.

Nantes, still unbeaten in the first division which they lead by 10 clear points, were bundled out of the French cup by third division St. Leu on penalties, while Blackburn's Premier League lead was kept down to two points by a 3-1 defeat at Tottenham.

"We have been sustaining a hell of a pace from the start of the season. We knew some day we would have to slow down a bit. That's what we are going through right now," Nantes defender Serge Le Dizet said.

Captain Jean-Michel Ferri, hoping the upset would act as a spur for Nantes, said: "We must forget about it as soon as possible, be strong and focus on the league title, which is our main goal, and the UEFA Cup."

Nantes meet Bayer Leverkusen in the UEFA Cup quarter-finals. They resume their seemingly unstoppable assault on the league title away at Rennes in a Breton Derby on Wednesday.

Blackburn have been eliminated from the free cup competitions this season, including the UEFA Cup in September before they hit a purple patch in the league in which they dropped only two points in 12 matches between late October and mid-January.

With only the championship to concentrate on, Rovers looked set to pull ever further away from the field — the more so when second placed Manchester United were obliged to ban Eric Cantona for the remainder of the season.

But while the champions, who beat Rovers 1-0 at home two weeks ago, picked up seven points from their last three matches, Blackburn faltered badly, a home draw with Leeds being followed by the defeat at White Hart Lane on Sunday.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMARA HIRSCH
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

- Q.1—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠Q83 ♣KJ10 ♠8732 ♠43
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
1 ♠ Pass ?
What action do you take?
- Q.2—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠76 ♠83 ♠A8764 ♠Q942
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass ?
What action do you take?
- Q.3—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠76 ♠Q1065 ♠89 ♠67632
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass ?
What action do you take?
- Q.4—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠QJ72 ♠84 ♠K76 ♠AQ105
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ 2 ♣
What action do you take?
- Q.5—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AQ84 ♠76 ♠A865 ♠743
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♣ Pass
2 ♠ Pass ?
What action do you take?
- Q.6—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠74 ♠KJ74 ♠A865 ♠A108
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?
What do you bid now?

Brown: Violence blocks investments

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — U.S. Commerce Secretary Ron Brown said Monday that continued violence was a major obstacle to private investment in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"Investors want a certain comfort level," Mr. Brown told reporters. "They want to know that their investments are safe... and that kind of assurance must come from people in the region."

U.S. officials travelling with Mr. Brown said that since autonomy began last May, only one private U.S.-Palestinian venture was formed, a factory making building materials in the Gaza Strip.

The U.S. government offers private investors loan guarantees and political risk insurance as incentives, the officials said.

Mr. Brown, accompanied by American business executives, arrived in Israel Sunday on the first leg of a week-long Middle East tour promoting U.S. trade and investment in the region. On his agenda are meetings with Israeli and Palestinian business and political leaders.

Mr. Brown also tempered his initial criticism of Israel's closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The closure, imposed after a Jan. 22 suicide bombing, bars tens of thousands of Palestinian labourers from reaching jobs in Israel.

Mr. Brown said Sunday that the restrictions were "devastating economically" for the Palestinians.

Asked to comment further on the issue Monday, he said: "I certainly understand the security needs of the closure."

"The unfortunate thing is that many people are punished for terrorist acts that are just absolutely unacceptable and must be dealt with," Mr. Brown said.

Mr. Brown will meet Tuesday with Palestine Liberation

Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat in Gaza to discuss investment projects in the West Bank and Gaza.

Later this week, Mr. Brown will attend a regional trade summit with Jordanian, Israeli, Egyptian and Palestinian officials in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Tabá.

Mr. Brown called the meeting "historic" and looked forward to greater cooperation, removing trade barriers and enhancing the role of the private sector in the Middle East.

His trip, which began in Cairo on Sunday, also takes in the West Bank, Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

"To build lasting peace and stability we must ensure the region has a strong economic foundation," he said.

Israel and the United States issued a joint communique during Mr. Brown's visit declaring 1995 the "year of U.S.-Israeli free trade" to be marked by a series of joint ventures and encouragement for bilateral trade and investment.

On Jan. 1, duty was lifted on all goods covered in the 1985 U.S.-Israel free trade agreement.

Mr. Brown sealed a cooperation accord with Energy Minister Gonen Segev allowing U.S. power companies to enter the Israeli market, officials said.

American companies would be able to take a share of up to a fifth of the country's electricity needs, 900 megawatts.

Two U.S. companies, Mid-Atlantic and Global, have proposed projects which would generate from 150 to 200 megawatts.

Shaath warns U.S.

Palestinian negotiator Nabil Shaath on Sunday warned a congressional initiative to move the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem could destroy peace negotiations with Israel.



A Chechen fighter with a Kalashnikov sits in the office of the Chechen state security department of Ochkhey. Marton is one of the centres of Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev's forces that is being encircled by Russian troops (AFP photo)

Russians continue raids; refugees flee Grozny

ALKHAN-YURT, Russia (AP) — Russian warplanes pelted this town southwest of Grozny with bombs Monday, and more refugees streamed out of Chechnya as widespread fighting continued in the Grozny area.

Chechen fighters said the Russians had resumed bombing oil and chemical factories in and around the shattered capital. They saw the tactic as a sign of Russian frustration at still having failed to seize Grozny.

"It means they're losing hope of taking Grozny," said Saladin Kitayev, a chief in the Chechen special forces, standing at a crossroads about 10 kilometres from Grozny. "Otherwise, they'd save the factories for themselves."

As Mr. Kitayev spoke, a Russian plane roared unseen overhead and delivered a bomb strike through thick clouds on the centre of Alkhan-Yurt, about three kilometres away. Minutes later, another bomber followed suit.

Chechens at the crossroads did not even flinch at the air raid, hardened by nearly two months of war in their homeland. It was not immediately clear whether the bombs had caused serious damage or casualties.

Khaki-clad Chechen fighters emerging from Grozny said their forces were tightening

a circle around a force of about 70 Russian tanks and other armoured vehicles in the southern suburb of Prigorodnoye, where they said a big battle was under way.

Scattered fighting also was reported inside the city, south of the Sunzha River, as the Russians tried to establish control.

The clashes were driving more and more refugees out of secessionist Chechnya, bound mostly for neighbouring Ingushetia in mud-caked buses, packed cars and canvas-covered trucks.

Marina Bersanova, carrying three bags and shepherding her two small children ahead of her, said the overnight bombing on her area west of Grozny finally persuaded her to leave.

"The planes were flying literally right over our houses," said Ms. Bersanova, 30, as she arrived in the Ingush capital, Nazran. "The children were crying. They were very afraid. It is impossible to live there any longer."

An official in Ingushetia said Sunday that his republic's population has swelled by half by the Chechen outflow, and the situation is fast becoming critical.

Some refugees have gone on to neighbouring north Ossetia, Dagestan or else-

where in Russia. But most stay in tiny Ingushetia, crammed into emergency housing or squeezed into private homes and putting tremendous stress on the already battered economy.

About 10,000 people have been arriving from Chechnya every week since Russian troops invaded the territory on Dec. 11 to suppress its claim to independence.

The Ingush share a common language, culture and the Muslim faith with the Chechens but are paying a high price for their hospi-

There are now more than 140,000 refugees, the majority of them from Chechnya, in a region of 260,000 permanent residents.

Nazir Doskiyev, head of the Ingush immigration office, called it a "very bad situation."

"Soon there may be a deficit of food, beds and medicine here," he said. "Sunday, if the refugees stay until summer, there may also be an epidemic. These are not reasonable living conditions."

The estimated 50,000 people remaining in Grozny are living without water, heat, medicine or any safe way to get food, said Jean-Louis Lacaze, the director of operations for Doctors Without Borders in Chechnya.

Strategic town falls to Afghan dissidents

KABUL (Agencies) — The strategic northern town of Kunduz has fallen to forces opposed to Afghanistan's President Burhanuddin Rabbani, a spokesman for Mr. Rabbani's defence ministry said on Monday.

The spokesman, Dr. Abdullah, said the city fell to troops allied to northern warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum on Sunday.

"Dostum's forces launched a major two-pronged assault from the town of Aliabad about 25 kilometres to the south, and from the Charadrah bridge west of the city early on Sunday morning," he said.

"We managed to repel the attack, but couldn't hold our lines against a second advance, also from Aliabad," he said.

Dr. Abdullah said the attackers rolled back the 54th division from its base at the airport and by early evening they had taken the city.

Casualty figures were unavailable.

Dr. Abdullah said the defenders, who are allied to Mr. Rabbani, regrouped in villages to the northeast of Kunduz city and were poised to launch a counterattack.

"The last time Dostum tried this was in March last year, but he could only hold the town for six days," Dr. Abdullah said.

"He doesn't have the support of the people, so I think it will be impossible for him to maintain control over the city for any length of time. He couldn't do it last year and I don't think he'll do it again."

Dr. Abdullah accused Uzbekistan of supplying General Dostum's forces with arms for the attack on Kunduz. He said Uzbekistan believes that it will be more secure if Gen. Dostum controls all the regions along Afghanistan's northern border. Gen. Dostum is an ethnic Uzbek.

"This is their aim, but they don't understand that the only thing that will make their borders safe is to have peace in Afghanistan," Dr.

Abdullah said. "As for Dostum, I believe he thinks he can make up his losses with the people by gaining more ground, and this too is a myth."

Dr. Abdullah said that another attack by the Uzbek general's forces was expected on Sher Khan Bandar, approximately 60 kilometres to the north of Kunduz.

This strategic border crossing on the Oxus River with Tajikistan is Afghanistan's only commercial route to Central Asia still held by the presidential forces.

Earlier Monday a spokesman for Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami, Ustad Saeed, said the Hezb-e-Islami and Gen. Dostum's troops took Kunduz city on Sunday without a battle after many of Mr. Rabbani's commanders had gone over to the opposition.

The loss of Kunduz is a major blow to the Afghan president and his military commander Ahmad Shah Masoud.

Mr. Saeed said pro-Rabbani commanders started to switch sides after Kunduz airport was taken Sunday morning.

He said fighting was extending to the neighbouring province of Takhat, a Masoud stronghold, where three pro-Rabbani Uzbek commanders have also switched sides.

The fighting came as the United Nations special envoy to Afghanistan, Mahmud Mestiri, said he was close to completing negotiations for an interim governing authority to take over from the existing administration.

Mr. Mestiri's political adviser Charles Santos said on Sunday that he hopes the main factions will have agreed on a list of names to form the interim council by the end of the week.

Afghanistan's rival factions have been fighting for control of the country since the communist government fell in April 1992. The International Committee of the Red Cross estimates that 25,000 people have been killed since then.

COLUMN

Armed robbers raid London jewellers

LONDON (R) — Armed robbers took gems worth £250,000 (\$394,000) from British Queen Elizabeth's jewellers Sunday and escaped as dozens of policemen besieged an empty building believing they were still inside. Police said one of the thieves, disguised as a policeman and armed with a handgun, followed two security guards carrying a bag of jewels into the exclusive firm Garrard's in the heart of London. He let two accomplices in and the guards were overpowered, bound and gagged before the three robbers escaped in a getaway car with the jewels, including brooches and a tiara. The whole raid took around 15 minutes but 70 policemen sealed off the area for more than six hours before storming the building and discovering the robbers were no longer inside. Onlookers said the two security guards, who were wearing civilian clothes, appeared to have been arrested by police who mistook them for the crooks. "Clearly they were very professional, determined and knowledgeable criminals," detective Chief Inspector Colin Harry said. Police are hunting for the thieves.

N. Korea issues stamps for Kim's birthday

TOKYO (R) — North Korea has issued postage stamps, postcards and envelopes to celebrate the 53rd birthday of Kim Jong-Il, the son and heir of late "great leader" Kim Il-Sung. Pyongyang's official news agency said Monday. Kim Jong-Il turns 53 on Feb. 16. Seven months after the death of his father, the younger Kim has yet to be named state president or leader of the Communist Party, keeping alive speculation about his health or a power struggle. "The stamps show the leadership feats and noble personality of comrade Kim Jong-Il, who is wisely organising and leading the work of the (Communist) Party, the state and the Revolutionary Armed Forces as a whole," said the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), monitored in Tokyo. "Comrade Kim Jong-Il is a great man who devotes even his birthday when he should take a rest amid the blessings of the people around the world to the accomplishment of the cause of socialism and to the happiness of the people," KCNA said.

Belgian toddler shoots pregnant mother

BRUSSELS (R) — A Belgian toddler accidentally shot and seriously wounded his pregnant mother, who then gave birth prematurely, police said Monday. The accident happened late last week in the southern Belgian village of le Bizet but details have only just been released. Police said the three-year-old boy, looking as he did every evening for sweets in his father's briefcase, discovered a gun in the case. The toddler, thinking the gun was a toy, aimed it at his mother and pulled the trigger, wounding her in the abdomen. The mother, 26 weeks pregnant, was rushed to hospital in a coma and later gave birth to a baby weighing less than one kg. (2.2 pounds), police said. The mother is still in a critical condition. The baby is expected to live, the Belgian newspaper La Dernière Heure said. Police said they are probing how the toddler's father came into the possession of the gun, which he allegedly found but did not hand into the police.

Police save burglar from drowning

BLOIS, France (AFP) — A burglar who tried to escape from his pursuers by swimming across a swollen river was saved from drowning by two gendarmes, police said Monday. Bouchaïn Oukil, 25, crashed a stolen car as he tried to flee and drove into the swirling waters of the River Braye, but soon got into difficulties. He was pulled out of the river by two gendarmes, given a hospital checkup and jailed in this Loire Valley city Saturday.

Report blames militia for Beirut chemical dumping

BEIRUT (AP) — Authorities Monday implicated an outlawed Christian militia in the import and dumping of Italian toxic waste in the late 1980s.

A classified army intelligence report read to parliament's environment committee said 20 members of the now-defunct Lebanese Forces militia were involved. The militia, the Christians' main fighting machine in the 1975-1990 civil war, was then in control of the Christian heartland north of Beirut.

The environmental organisation Greenpeace last week said analysis of a few barrels of waste it discovered showed traces of toxic compounds methyl acrylate and ethyl acrylate but no radioactive material.

The Greenpeace disclosure came amid a public outcry demanding information about what happened to the thousands of barrels of chemicals believed dumped on land or off the coast during the war.

The crisis has shaken the cohesion of Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri's government.

Former Druze warlord Walid Junblatt, now minister of refugees, has called for the dismissal and trial of Environment Minister Samir Mogbel.

Mr. Mogbel has denied any wrongdoing. Greenpeace estimates

10,000 barrels, or 15,000 tonnes, of waste remain in Lebanon and pose a serious ecological danger. However, other environmental experts say the number of missing barrels is under 2,000.

The experts said some contaminated barrels were emptied and sold for use in pickling, soap-making and other uses they felt could be harmful to one's health.

The barrels were imported from Italy in 1987 and 1988, according to Greenpeace and the army intelligence report. Thousands of barrels have since been returned to Italy because of public pressure.

Meanwhile, Prosecutor General Munif Oweidat reversed a 1988 pardon on the dumping of chemical waste and decided to investigate later this week.

The Lebanese Forces commander Samir Geagea and top lieutenant Fuad Malek are in jail, standing trial for the bombing that the prosecution charged was an attempt to discredit the government and reignite the civil war.

Mr. Geagea is also on trial for the 1990 assassination of a rival Christian politician.

Mr. Geagea, who flirted with Israel during the civil war, has denied any involvement in the church bombing and the assassination, saying he was being victimised because of his opposition to Lebanon's current Syrian-backed regime.

Latest Iraq contraband suspect — dates, not oil

BAHRAIN (AP) — A key task for the U.S.-led naval armada in the Gulf is to make sure Iraq does not violate the world embargo by exporting oil. But lately, it has been tracking other contraband — dates.

Four ships stopped in the Gulf in recent months were loaded with dates, including the Panamanian-registered Gulf Splendor, whose 2,100-tonne cargo has stirred an unprecedented fuss.

The shippers insist the dates were loaded in an Iranian port. But the U.S. Navy, which impounded the ship Jan. 18, says it has strong evidence the cargo came from Iraq.

Under the U.N. embargo, Iraq is forbidden from exporting not just oil but also virtually all other goods.

The allied naval force has diverted more than 500 vessels since the sanctions were imposed in August 1990, but no incident so far has created such a stir.

The fuss began last week after the Gulf Splendor was escorted to Umm Al Quwain, a port in the United Arab Emirates, to await further action by the U.N. Sanctions Committee.

The ship had been destined for Bombay for a Bangalore-based importer, and the strong Indian community in the UAE swung into action to try to get the vessel released.

Officials from both the Indian embassy in Abu Dhabi and the consulate in Dubai cited the 15-member Indian crew and made arrangements for the supply of provisions.

Indian diplomats began spreading word that they doubted the U.S. Navy was right in impounding the vessel, taking the crew's word that the cargo was loaded at the Iranian port of Ahad.

Iran has complained at the United Nations over alleged harassment of ships that ply its ports.

Court rejects Carlos plea

PARIS (AFP) — A court here on Monday rejected an application by "Carlos the Jackal" for his release in connection with an indictment for a 1983 attack on a high-speed Marseille-Paris train which killed three people and injured 20.

Lawyers Jacques Vergès and Mourad Qussedik had applied against an order by anti-terrorist Judge Jean-Louis Bruguière committing Carlos to prison after charging him with the train attack on Jan. 8.

The court also rejected an application that the hearing be held in public.

According to judicial sources, Carlos complained in court Monday of his detention in solitary confinement. He argued that the case was political and not a common felony, the sources said.

Mr. Qussedik protested rejection of the application for a public hearing, saying: "For the past six months, Carlos has been condemned to absolute silence and cannot defend himself either in the media or before French and international public opinion."

Carlos, who has been in custody in Paris since being arrested in Sudan and brought here last August, has already been charged in connection with a number of other attacks in France during the 1980s and had been held in the Santé prison here on those charges.

Carlos — real name Illich Ramirez Sanchez — was sent to France after being arrested in the Sudanese capital Khartoum on Aug. 15 last year.

Also last month he was indicted over a 1983 bombing at Marseille railway station which killed two people and injured 34.

Last year he was charged with a Paris bomb attack in March 1982 which killed one person and injured 63, and with the bombing of a Paris-Toulouse train in the same month which killed five.

Ties with U.S. will not solve economic woes — Iran

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Iran's economic problems would not be solved just by resuming diplomatic ties with the United States, Iran's foreign minister said in an interview published Monday. Ali Akbar Velayati told the daily Salaam that "those who consider a relationship with the United States a panacea are definitely making a mistake."

"We have many examples of countries which had the same expectations, but got nowhere," he said.

He said the countries of the former Soviet Union once had high expectations of U.S. aid, but had received disappointingly little.

Iran's problems, said Mr. Velayati, could only be solved by Iranians themselves.

"The problems of the Islamic Republic of Iran are not going to be solved by giving ransom to the United States," Mr. Velayati said.

The Iranian government has been unable to borrow out economic difficulties mainly caused by the huge losses of the 1980-88 war with Iraq.

Despite having no formal ties, the United States is among Iran's top trade partners, with most commerce conducted through third parties or countries.

On the international scene, Washington has been trying to isolate Iran because of its opposition to the Arab-Israeli peace process and hostility towards Washington's policies in the region.

The Farsi-language newspaper, a copy of which was obtained by the Associated Press in Nicosia, quoted Mr.

Velayati as saying he did not see the possibility of Iran-U.S. ties being resumed in the near future.

The United States severed ties with Iran in 1979, after militants stormed the U.S. embassy in Tehran and took 52 Americans hostage for 444 days.

Touching on other topics, Mr. Velayati said Iran was the only country that was unwilling to make any compromise with Israel, and was fundamentally opposed to its existence. He said that was why Tehran was opposed to the Arab-Israeli peace process.

"We prevent it where we have more influence and we express our opposition where we have a lesser presence," Mr. Velayati said. He added that his country, which fought a bitter eight-year war

with Iraq, had no problems with improving ties with Baghdad.

There is a lack of sincerity in Iraq's attitude towards Iran," he said. "Iraqi officials compromise relations with Iran and use it as a leverage in their great effort to get close to certain Western countries with which we have problems."

He said the two neighbours were also divided by Baghdad's support for Iranian opposition groups, notably the main armed rebel faction, the Mujahedeen-e-Khalq.

"Every time we were to have negotiations, there was an attack from the opposition groups based in Iraq," Mr. Velayati said. "This will definitely not create a friendly atmosphere for normalised ties."